Mentoring and Being Mentored: An Inside Story

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the University of Northumbria at Newcastle for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Research undertaken in the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

August 2020

Abstract

Purpose: The role of the mentor is central to a student's successful transition to newly qualified teacher but the quality of mentoring within Initial Teacher Education is varied. With the rise of school-led routes, the mentor will play an even more significant role in the progress of student, and newly qualified, teachers. This research aims to find ways of improving the quality of the mentoring experience, for both mentors and mentees, and thus improve outcomes for all stakeholders in the process.

Approach: I have undertaken this study as a researching professional. As an experienced teacher, and teacher educator, I bring an understanding of the pressures experienced by both mentors and student teachers. I have taken account of the current political context, mentoring discourse and have engaged with student teachers and mentors, working within a provider-led ITE partnership in the North East of England. Drawing on my experience and my research, I have been able to interpret, and synthesise, the experiences and views of student teachers and mentors, to draw conclusions about positive ways forward.

Findings: My research identifies that some of our accepted practices contribute to the creation of contexts which do not support the mentoring process from the outset. It also identifies areas of tension, within the process, that we could alleviate. Some of these tensions are fostered, for example, by multiple understandings of the key terms used in everyday mentoring discourse. Meaningful preparation for the process is currently focussed on mentors which contributes to mentees not consistently taking active roles in the process, or responsibility for their own learning.

Value: The findings led to the development of a conceptual framework to underpin a model mentoring, focussed on the mentee. The framework underpins small-step changes to foster improvement from within, empowering students to take responsibility for, and ownership of, specific aspects of the mentoring process. This would have a positive impact on a mentor's ability to mentor a student teacher more effectively thus impacting upon a student's progression and emotional wellbeing. The implementation of the framework would also equip newly qualified teachers with the skills and attributes of proactive mentees, ready to engage with the mentoring available to them within the Early Career Framework.

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Acknowledgements

I am indebted to Dr Jane Davies for her gimlet eye, constructive feedback, unwavering support and thoughtfulness. Her willingness to give her time so generously has been very much appreciated.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Dr Sean McCusker for his hard questions, always delivered in a disarmingly relaxed fashion, and his practical advice.

Finally, I wish to thank my family. I have benefitted from our motto, ‘un pour tous et tous pour un’ and promise to do my bit now. Even though some of them didn’t quite grasp the importance of the ‘Keep Out – PhD in Progress’ sign until the final stages, they have been the best support system I could have hoped for.

Author's declaration

I declare that the work contained in this thesis has not been submitted for any other award and that it is all my own work. I also confirm that this work fully acknowledges opinions, ideas and contributions from the work of others.

Any ethical clearance for the research presented in this thesis has been approved. Approval has been sought and granted by the Faculty Ethics Committee 03/13, Research Ethics Number: RE13-03-12746.

I declare that the Word Count of this thesis is 77,803 words

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Chapter One: Introduction

> Learning to teach is not a mere matter of applying decontextualized skills or of mirroring predetermined images; it is a time when one's past, present and future are set in dynamic tension. Learning to teach—like teaching itself—is always the process of becoming, a time of formation and transformation, of scrutiny into what one is doing and who one can become.
>
> (Britzman, 2003, p31)

The overarching area of the research has students making the transition to teacher at its centre, a complex process recognised as interactive, dynamic, and interpretive (Shaw, Dvorak & Bates, 2007). Students' teaching experiences are considered to be the most influential aspects of an initial teacher education programme (Izadinia, 2016) which is where students make that transition. At the centre of the teaching experience is the relationship between a student and their mentor (Caruso, 2000). The specific area of this research is an exploration of students' and mentors' experiences of mentoring, in the context of provider-led initial teacher education.

1.1 Rationale for Study

The rationale for this project arose from my own experiences of working with student teachers for over 20 years. I was a teacher in primary and early years settings for 15 years. During that time, I mentored many student teachers who were making the transition to qualified teacher. I moved from working full-time as a teacher in a school to working part-time there and also part-time as a teacher educator with a local authority SCITT (School Centred Initial Teacher Training) and then moved to being a full-time teacher educator at an HEI. I had had experience of being the school-based mentor and also the teacher educator who visited students on placement in the capacity of 'link tutor' i.e., the tutor who is the link between student, school and university.

Across these roles, there were some specific aspects of mentoring which unsettled me, for example, the notion of 'feedback' that had always been a central aspect of the mentoring

processes that I had been involved in. Fundamental to the mentoring processes I had experienced was the idea of students observing teachers teaching, being observed teaching themselves and then receiving feedback. Having delivered feedback to students after observing them in a teaching role I noticed that they generally 'sat quietly' and listened passively, even when encouraged to respond. Students would be aware that they were 'guests in the classroom' (Ward & Wells, 2003, p42) and perhaps the implicit message was that they should be passive. It was rare that I felt I had facilitated an opportunity for a 'real' conversation about their feedback which indicated to me that for some reason they felt unable to engage and be proactive. I often felt uneasy after feeding back to students and felt as though they had not truly verbalised their thoughts to me. Consequently, I was not convinced that I was being as useful for their professional development as I potentially could be, it was often as though they would not share with me what they were really thinking and I found this disquieting. This issue of students not engaging as effectively as they could had clearly been recognised beyond my experience as the purpose of Hudson's (2013, p3) research was 'to commence collating potential attributes and practices that may assist mentees to engage more effectively with mentor teachers when undertaking school experiences'.

In addition to student teachers' passivity there was also often an emotional response to feedback. Timostsuk and Ugaste (2010) had recognised that setbacks elicited strong emotional responses in students but I found that even when the feedback was positive students exhibited similar emotional responses. I assumed this was evidence of a student's relief, demonstrating to me that formal feedback was potentially highly stressful for a student following an equally stressful period of observed practice with children. The emotional response often appeared as a surprise to the students and they were not aware that this was common, apologising profusely and clearly feeling embarrassed. Although Hudson (2013, p3) cited Le Cornu and Ewing (2008), Maynard (2000) and Monaghan and Lunt (1992) as all having uncovered evidence of students being worried about how they would interact with their mentors, my own experience suggested that, prior to placement, students were mostly

concerned by the practical aspects surrounding being on placement. Aspects such as what time to arrive in school, what constituted appropriate clothing and how much of the timetable they were expected to teach. It did not appear to me that students, prior to their first assessed placement, were expecting aspects of the mentoring experience to exert such powerful influences over their ability to maintain an emotional equilibrium.

Gu and Day (2013, p25) suggested that resilience is an unstable construct which involves an ability to regulate emotions (Greenberg, 2006; Luthar & Brown, 2007) within a range of contexts. Students, because they were finding it challenging to regulate their emotions were demonstrating to me that their ability to be resilient was being challenged by aspects of the mentoring process. Experiences such as these were what led me to explore student/mentor relationships to illuminate mentoring practice and the unseen areas of tension that must be existing for those involved. I believed that effective mentoring should not be an aspect of learning to teach that challenged a student's ability to maintain their capacity for resilience but should be an aspect which supported them in being able to maintain it. Furthermore, with my own practice being aligned with a constructivist approach, I believed that students needed to be in a position where they had a voice and could proactively engage with their own learning, with a view to them becoming 'autonomous and agentic' (Hobson, 2016) in their developing practice.

My thoughts were in line with those of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development:

> The quality of teaching is determined not just by the 'quality' of the teachers—although that is clearly critical—but also the environment in which they work. Able teachers are not necessarily going to reach their potential in settings that do not provide appropriate support or sufficient challenge or reward.
> (OECD, 2005, p.9)

I believed that providers and mentors were certain that they were indeed supporting their student teachers but I was not convinced that this support was the most appropriate support if we were clearly challenging students' capacities to be resilient to this degree. Given that my role as a teacher educator was to maximise my students' progress then it stood to

reason that, having identified an area of concern, it was my responsibility to address it. Thus, my decision to investigate the mentoring process was with the aim of effecting positive change in my own practice and practice that I was directly involved in. This put me into the position of being a 'researching professional' (Wellington & Sikes, 2006, p725), in accordance with Stenhouse (1975, p142) who asserted that 'it is not enough that teachers' work should be studied: they need to study it themselves'. This assertion resonates with Carr and Kemmis' (1986, p162) definition of action research as 'simply a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations' with the purpose of:

- Improving practice
- Improving understanding of practice
- Improving the situation in which the practice takes place.

Finally, and in relation to the previous points, it is important to acknowledge the work of Gage (1989) where he reminded us that the end concern of educational research, aside from the philosophical position it takes, is a moral obligation to ensure that positive outcomes for children are ensured. It is a perspective that I held to strongly and the aim of research that focussed on supporting student teachers would also impact upon the learning and well-being of the children whom they taught.

1.2 Establishing the Context

Hobson et al (2009) reported that, since the 1980s, mentoring came to play a more prominent role in supporting the early professional development of teachers. Since that time the mentoring relationship continued to become increasingly important as initial teacher education (ITE) underwent a shift due to the clear political agenda (DfE, 2016) of moving it out of the institutes of higher education (HEI) and much more into the hands of schools where an 'apprenticeship approach' would naturally be more dominant. As described by Mansell (2013), university courses training England's next generation of teachers had the number of places, for which they received government-funding, cut dramatically in the

autumn of 2012, as the coalition government at that time embarked on a restructuring, with the aim of training more teachers ‘on the job’ (DfE, 2017) in schools. The education secretary at that time, Michael Gove, wanted greater emphasis on students learning about teaching in schools (Mansell, 2013). In July 2012, Gove announced a significant expansion of School Direct, the government's main vehicle for funding teacher training through schools, with a subsequent cut in the number of places funded through universities. Under School Direct, students applied to a school or group of schools. Schools typically worked with a university, which provided the more academic elements of the training, for example, such as learning theory and critical analysis of the political agenda with reference to research. The government’s White Paper, Educational Excellence Everywhere (DfE, 2016), made their intention at that time to continue to ‘continue to move to an increasingly school-led ITT system’ (DfE, 2016a, p28) explicit as illustrated by the following statement:

> Since 2010 we have encouraged the shift towards a school-led ITT system, with schools taking greater responsibility for all aspects of teacher training from the selection and recruitment of candidates to the design and delivery of training programmes.
> DfE (2016a, p29)

Even before the publication of the government’s 2016 White Paper, School Direct was poised to expand from 300 to more than 6,000 places in September 2013, with university-led provision at that point falling by 7%, from 28,000 to 26,000 (Mansell 2013). However, by 2017 the School Direct programme was training over 10,000 new teachers (DfE, 2017, p29). In addition to the rise of School Direct, and the introduction of the Troops to Teachers (DfE, 2013) route, another school-based route, Teach First was founded in 2002 with 197 participants in 2004 and over 10,000 participants by 2017 (Teach First, 2017). At the same time, The National College for Teaching and Leadership (2017) published guidance for providers about yet another new route into teaching, the ‘postgraduate teaching apprenticeship’, a school-led initial teacher training route that combined paid work with on- and off-the-job training, qualifications, and progression. It allowed candidates to train to

become qualified teachers and was available to trainees starting in September 2018 (NCTL, 2017).

Subsequently, the growth of school-led providers was significant and for the first time, in 2016, over half of trainee teachers were being trained through school-led routes (DfE 2016a, p29). Alongside the shift to school-led ITE provision, there was evidence of the role of the HEIs being proactively eroded. When the DfE stated that 'A group of experienced schools and teachers have led the design of this postgraduate teacher training course [postgraduate teaching apprenticeship]' (DfE, 2017), the indication was that no HEIs were involved in the design of this programme. This, therefore, suggested that the government at that time believed that institutes of higher education were increasingly irrelevant to the education, or training, of beginning teachers. If the selling points of school-led and university-based courses were considered it was again possible to see which routes to teaching were preferred by the government and therefore which routes would expand. The very labels of 'university based' and 'school led' subliminally reinforced the government's stance with 'based' carrying connotations of 'being still' and 'led' of moving forwards. The DfE (2017) stated that 'On a school-led training course, you'll get the chance to learn on the job in at least two schools, learning from experienced colleagues.', this is clearly a sentence with persuasive undertones; 'you'll get the chance', 'to learn on the job', 'from experienced colleagues', 'in at least two schools'. This same sentence could equally be used to describe university-based training but instead that was simply described as 'teacher training courses for both graduates and undergraduates. If you want your teacher training to be based at a university, this is the option for you.' (DfE, 2017). This description used no attractive or enticing language to persuade a potential candidate to apply or to suggest that this route might have had any value over the other; it gave no indication of why a candidate might benefit from university-based training. Given the introduction of such school-based routes into teaching, which applicants were being steered towards by the government, then the role of the school-based mentor was becoming increasingly significant in terms of a student's successful transition to being a qualified teacher.

At the same time, the Teaching Schools Council, at the behest of the Secretary of State for Education, developed a set of non-statutory national standards for school-based initial teacher training mentors (TSC, 2016). A request for such a set of standards must demonstrate that the role of the mentor was deemed not only to be important but that mentoring practices at that time varied and were recognised as being inconsistent in quality. This study has the potential to enhance that set of standards.

Seven years after the government's explicit shifting to school-based ITT routes, and three years after the introduction of the mentor standards (TSC, 2016), the messages regarding the importance of school-based mentors were underlined further. The DfE's (2019c) revised ITT Core Curriculum referred to the importance of 'receiving clear consistent and effective, mentoring' throughout the document, defining that as:

> Receiving structured feedback from expert colleagues on a particular approach – using the best available evidence – to provide a structured process for improving the trainee's practice
>
> (DfE, 2019c, p5)

Although the role of the school-based mentor was highlighted as fundamental, the use of the word 'receive' still featured repeatedly in the revised ITT Core Curriculum documentation. The opportunity to work to engage mentees in aspects of the mentoring process was not acknowledged by the DfE which still supported a mentoring practice which adhered to the original meaning of the term whereby the status quo needs to be maintained and the mentee is put into a passive position. It was clear therefore that the role of a school-based mentor would continue to be a significant element of initial teacher education and training, as confirmed by Ofsted (2020a) in their 'Building great teachers?' report; 'The evidence also suggests that in-school mentors are a critical factor in supporting the practical implementation of the ITE curriculum'.

Ofsted (2020b), in their draft initial teacher education inspection framework, subsequently proposed that the mentoring process would continue to form part of their inspections, as they 'know that mentoring is vital in high-quality teacher education'. The importance of mentoring

was further underlined by its inclusion in the Early Career Framework (DfE, 2019b) for teachers, a framework introduced by the government to underpin 'an entitlement to a fully-funded, two-year package of structured training and support for early career teachers linked to the best available research evidence' (DfE, 2019b, p4). Consequently, mentoring was recognised as pivotal, not only to the success of those people making the transition to teacher, but also to the development and sustained progress of newly and recently qualified teachers. However, what constitutes effective mentoring was not made explicit and the implicit messages about the process was that it could be 'delivered' to the mentee. There was a general consensus that mentors were fundamental to a student teacher's success and that student teachers needed to be supported but what 'support' actually meant was not made explicit and so was still open to interpretation by all of those involved in the process. The acknowledgement of the importance of the school-based mentor's role, coupled with the rise in school-led routes, meant that the value of the school-based mentor was greater than ever and so there was a need to ensure that mentoring practices were as effective as possible. It is this undertaking to which the study aims to contribute.

1.3 Changes in the Concepts of Mentoring

The term 'mentor' originates from Homer's 'The Odyssey' (Cochran-Smith and Paris cited by Smyth, 1995, p181). Mentor is entrusted with the household when Odysseus sets sail for Troy and to take care of his son Telemachus. Mentor persuades, directly instructs, and takes over when necessary, 'to keep the household intact'. This style of mentoring works to ensure that things 'stay the same', the status quo is upheld and the boat is not rocked. In the context of teaching, this would mean that a style of practice would be copied by a mentee so that there was minimal disruption to a class of children. There would be limited opportunity for a student teacher to impact upon their mentor's practice and so the assumption must be that it would be inconceivable that a mentor could learn anything from a mentee. Lofthouse and Thomas (2014, p219) referred to the work of Kochan and Pascarelli (2012) who described

differing paradigms for mentoring to categorise the typical mentoring processes. The paradigms they proposed were:

- 'traditional' which transmitted the existing cultures and behaviours
- 'transitional' which allowed for the development of creativity or innovative practice
- 'transformative' which would enable beliefs and routines to be questioned to allow for a consideration of how things might be rather than an assertion of how they are

Cochran–Smith and Paris (cited by Smyth, 1995, p187) asserted that mentoring is about the 'the joint work of more and less experienced teachers rather than the delivery of knowledge from one to another'. This style of mentoring, aligned with a constructivist's stance, would necessitate that students would have a proactive role to play rather than a reactive role. There would be space, for example, for joint ventures and the social construction of knowledge. There is clearly a mentoring style spectrum with Homer's Mentor at one end and Kochan and Pascerelli's (2012) transformative paradigm at the other. The DfE (2016, p7) defined a mentor as

> a suitably-experienced teacher who has formal responsibility to work collaboratively within the ITT partnership to help ensure the trainee receives the highest-quality training.

As an aside, it should be noted that what constituted as 'suitable experience' was not made clear. Consequently, the definition could be referring to experience of teaching, rather than experience of mentoring, this will be reflected upon within the literature review chapter. However, as this definition implies that the 'trainee' would be 'in receipt' of 'training'; a co-construction of knowledge is not a feature of this understanding and it would seem that school-based mentors were being encouraged to mentor in the style of Mentor 'to keep the household intact'. This approach is not surprising as the mentoring of student teachers takes place 'in workplace cultures that are largely performative' (Lofthouse and Thomas, 2014, p202) and consequently mentors would be taking a risk by allowing student teachers to employ what they might not consider to be the tried and tested teaching strategies. This did resonate with some of my own experiences of working with students on placement and listening to students' experiences of being mentored, in post-placement tutorials, in that

opportunities for students to implement their own ideas seemed to have diminished across time.

1.4 Impact of Mentoring on Establishing a Professional Identity

Students are ‘vulnerable’ whilst out on placement in that they are very much the novice in an ‘expert’ environment and I would suggest that their professional identity is particularly fluid at this point as they observe other practitioners, are mentored and work to find their place. My personal experience suggested that students aspired to be the sort of teacher that their mentor expected them to be and that this often changed from mentor to mentor. In this way a student would often replicate the kind of teaching persona of their mentor to a) ensure continuity of experience for children and b) because of the perception that such a nominal conformity would sustain the status quo and give the student chances of the best possible mark. For example, Volkmann and Anderson (1998) examined the professional identity formation of one beginning science teacher. They found that this teacher’s images of teaching conflicted with more generic expectations of what makes a professional teacher. These generic expectations being (1) feeling like a student while being expected to act like a teacher, (2) wanting to care for students while being expected to be tough, and (3) feeling incompetent in her knowledge [subject knowledge] while being expected to behave like an expert. For a student teacher ‘the most obvious and important transition is the change from a relative novice into a knowledgeable, skilled participant of a discipline’ (Hussey and Smith, 2010, p157). Erikson (1968) suggested that identity is not something one has but something that develops during one’s whole life according to the various social contexts we find ourselves in. This was supported by Gee (2001) who continued to describe it as an ongoing process, a process of interpreting oneself as a certain kind of person and being recognized as such in a given context. The fluid nature of the concept of self-identity is evident as ‘identity is shifting, unstable and multiple’ Rodgers and Scott (2008, p733).

There are certainly particular balances of power at play in the student/mentor relationship for example, in the assumption that the student will need to accept the mentor’s feedback as

objective and fair and that questioning of that feedback may result in the evaluation of the student as being challenging to the mentor. Student teachers are expected to work towards achieving the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011), in order to be recommended for QTS, and Standard 8 states that they must respond to advice and feedback in order to improve their practice. My feeling was that students felt that they had to respond 'positively' to advice and feedback or they would be at risk of being seen as a 'difficult student'. Daloz (1986) stated that if support is low and challenge is high, a novice teacher will withdraw from learning. The balance of power is crucial at this point in that targets set by a mentor after feedback may be thought to be achievable but unless the student feels empowered they will not feel in a position to contribute to their own target setting and be confident that the level of challenge is not too high.

In Sewell's (2008, p41) advice to student teachers, he encouraged each to 'consider yourself to be an active partner, responsible for your own learning and shaping your own progress'. I was not convinced that students often felt allowed, or encouraged, to be an active partner, particularly in their initial placements. On those placements, students would be given access to their mentors' weekly plans and would construct their own individual lesson plans for those. The implication of this was that the student teachers would be told what to do and how to do it, the bits left to them to plan would be the minutiae, the practical aspects of sourcing resources as the 'big ideas' would already have been decided upon. For a student to be able to try out their ideas they would need to feel trusted by their mentors, however, if they were perpetually told what, and how, to deliver then the implicit message would be that they were not trusted to make their own decisions about ways forward. Stanulis and Russell (2000) identified trust and communication as important in effective mentoring which has implications for the formation of the most constructive relationships between mentor and student. They realised

> that unless we are also willing to expose our own vulnerabilities, we unconsciously engage in behaviours that safeguard our privileged positions ... The construct of mutual mentoring that we propose works against privileged positions.
> (Stanulis and Russell, 2000, p78)

I believed that an illustration of this was the fact that, in my experience, mentors did not often encourage students to question feedback about their own practice but this would be a useful way forward in the mentoring process, in alignment with the views of Stanulis and Russell (2000, p79) who went on to argue that:

> We believe that reforming our actions necessitates a stance that truly embraces the philosophy that each participant brings their own expertise and experience to learning about teaching, and that in various instances all are mentors and all are learners. We also believe that we play a crucial role in helping to open dialogue, but to do so in a way that can truly honour each voice in the conversation. This is a tricky position to imagine, but one we believe is necessary in order to truly create a caring environment that is both supportive and challenging: one where teachers, students, and university educators together learn from each other. For it is only as mentoring becomes mutual and shared that equity can be achieved among all participants.

1.5 Importance of Study

The quality of mentoring within ITE is varied (Hudson & Hudson, 2018), a point underlined by the first aim of the National Standards for school-based initial teacher training mentors (TSC, 2016), namely: 'to foster greater consistency in the practice of mentors'. As stated earlier, the role of the mentor is central to a student's success in the transition to teacher (Caruso, 2000). As it must be even more significant in longer periods of school-based experience, and with the rise of school-led routes, 'then the quality of mentoring practices has become ever more important' (Lofthouse, 2018, p250). Newly Qualified Teachers, who were comfortable with their own emerging professional identities, with experiences of a positive mentoring process, would be predicated towards displaying those attributes required to enable professional learning, and demonstrate the subsequent learning behaviours and cultures of Lofthouse's (2018) practice development-led model, aligned with Kochan and Pascerelli's (2012) transformative paradigm of mentoring. As early career teachers they would be in a stronger position to engage proactively with the mentoring available to them as part of the ECF (DfE, 2019b) and make a positive impact upon their own emotional

wellbeing, professional development and their institution's growth. They would be more prepared to mentor others in a similar vein with the ultimate result of improving outcomes for children. In addition, retention of teachers in England is problematic (House of Commons, 2018), effective mentoring could be instrumental in teachers feeling able to stay in the profession, as described by Hobson (2016, p88):

> beginner teachers who are mentored are less likely to leave the profession (Ingersoll and Kralik, 2004)[2]. However, unless appropriate conditions for mentorship are created, mentoring can be ineffectual and even harmful. Hence, some studies have found that mentoring can stunt beginner teachers' professional learning and development (PLD) (Feiman-Nemser et al., 1993; Ling, 2009), bring about anxiety and stress, and contribute to mentees' decisions to leave the profession (Beck and Kosnick, 2000; Maguire, 2001)

1.6 Research Aims

In summary, the study aimed to:

- explore the mentor-student relationship within assessed school-based placements on a University-based ITE provider's (University X) Initial Teacher Education Programmes, in the northeast of England
- identify and explore the features of what students, and school-based mentors, perceive to be effective mentoring
- identify the barriers to effective mentoring
- develop a conceptual framework, emerging from the data, which would underpin a model of mentoring to support students in the mentoring process and in turn support mentors in achieving 'mentor standards' (TSC, 2016)

The conceptual framework (Figure 32, p218) was constructed after exploring the mentor-student relationship within assessed school-based placements on University X's Initial Teacher Education Programmes. The features of what students, and school-based mentors, perceived to be effective mentoring were identified, explored and the barriers to effective mentoring clarified. In identifying the barriers to effective mentoring, the study illuminated potential areas for tension and the conceptual framework was designed to alleviate some of those. This built on the work of Hudson and Hudson (2018, p19) who said that 'attempting to

pinpoint where tensions occur in mentoring relationships may assist to more effectively target those areas prior to commencing professional experiences.' The study's findings directly informed the construction of the conceptual framework, designed to target those identified areas of tension prior to students embarking on their placement experiences.

1.7 Research Questions

In order to address the study's aims the following two key research questions were initially identified which framed the research:

- What happens when students are mentored?
- How do mentors support students in becoming effective teachers?

After two initial focus group discussions, with students, a second set of research questions were developed to explore the specific themes emerging from that first wave of data collection:

- What do mentors and students perceive to be effective support for students making the transition to teacher?
- What do mentors and students understand about the role of the mentor?
- What do mentors consider to be the desirable attributes of a mentee?
- What do students consider to be the desirable attributes of a mentor?
- What aspects of the mentoring process do students and mentors find challenging?
- What do students do to ensure that the mentoring experience is positive?

1.8 Original Contribution to Knowledge

The key original contribution to knowledge, made by the study, is the Conceptual Framework to Underpin a Model of Mentoring (Figure 32, p218). The study also added to the body of knowledge of areas of tension within mentoring relationships in ITE, for both mentors and

mentees. Consequently, the outcomes of this study will be relevant to student teachers, school-based mentors and teacher educators, whether school or university-based.

It had been recognised, prior to the study, that there are possibilities for tensions to occur within the mentor–mentee relationship during school-based professional experiences that require problem solving (Hudson and Hudson, 2018; Izadinia, 2016). My own experiences resonated with this recognition when, for example, I encountered unexplained emotional responses from students to aspects of the mentoring processes. As stated earlier (p22), my study built on the work of Hudson and Hudson (2018) who researched areas of tension identified by mentors but acknowledged that a next step was to examine areas of tension identified by mentees. These specific areas of tension were illuminated by my research and subsequently addressed in the proposed framework, to improve the process, for all participants.

The study's findings indicated that some fundamental terms, used freely within mentoring discourse (e.g., 'experience' and 'support'), are not clearly defined and are consequently open to interpretation to all participants of the process. My research highlighted that multiple understandings of what constitutes 'support', the 'role of the mentor' and the 'role of the mentee' were the source of developing tensions in a mentoring relationship. These areas of tension could be alleviated if the participants' expectations of the process were shared from the outset. This is an example of a previously unidentified barrier to effective mentoring. Now that it has been identified we can work to address the need for shared understandings of the language used in our mentoring discourse.

The conceptual framework, informed by the analysis of the data, underpins a model of mentoring to support students in the mentoring process. My research had also illuminated that University X's mentoring practices were still largely 'Traditional' with 'Transitional' elements (Kochan and Pascarell, 2012). Subsequently, the student teachers were not effectively prepared to take a proactive role in their mentoring relationship. Thus, my model sat behind Figure 9: Lofthouse's (2015, cited in Lofthouse, 2018) practice development-led

model for individual professional learning and institutional growth through mentoring, providing a stepping-stone from embedded traditional and transitional mentoring practices to those of a transformative nature. At University X, mentoring preparation was focussed on the mentors. This fitted with a traditional style of mentoring (Kochan and Pascarelli, 2012) where the mentee is a passive recipient within the process. Hobson et al. (2016, p8) had suggested, as an area for development for some of the mentoring schemes profiled in their study, that preparation activities could be provided for mentees. These would be designed to help mentees make the most of mentoring, and to have realistic expectations of the process. Subsequently, one of the conclusions to their study of mentoring across the professions, was that mentoring would

> tend to be more effective, and have a greater positive impact on mentee, mentors and organisations where … there are training and development opportunities for *mentees* [emphasis in original] (Hobson et al., 2016, p14)

My conceptual framework provides development opportunities for mentees. To facilitate the shift from a traditional style of mentoring to one which is transformative in nature, mentees need to be empowered. There is consequently a need to re-position the preparation focus to include the mentees to a much greater degree. This will enable them to be a driving force in the mentoring process, working in a collegial style together with their mentors. As this study illuminated aspects of challenge, for mentors and mentees, it was then possible to design a framework which targeted these areas with the aim of pre-empting these before they began to emerge in a placement experience.

In turn, my conceptual framework will support mentors, assisting them in meeting, and exceeding, the 'mentor standards' (TSC, 2016), improving the quality of the mentoring experience for all participants and developing their wider practice. For mentors to understand how to support a student, on their journey to teacher, as effectively as possible they need to have an awareness of how it is to be mentored in today's climate. Conversely, mentees need to be aware of how it is to be a mentor in today's performative school culture.

In this way mentors and mentees will be better prepared to support each other in the process. By describing and explaining what happens during the mentoring process, from participants' perspectives, a clearer understanding of what it is like to mentor, and be mentored, has been developed. This developed understanding is central to the resulting conceptual framework.

To summarise, my study's contribution to knowledge is the specific identification of areas of tension in the mentoring process, as experienced by the participants, these have informed the resulting conceptual framework. The framework works to empower mentees and to enable them to take a more proactive role in the process, impacting positively on their ability to engage in transformational practice, both as mentees and as future school-based mentors.

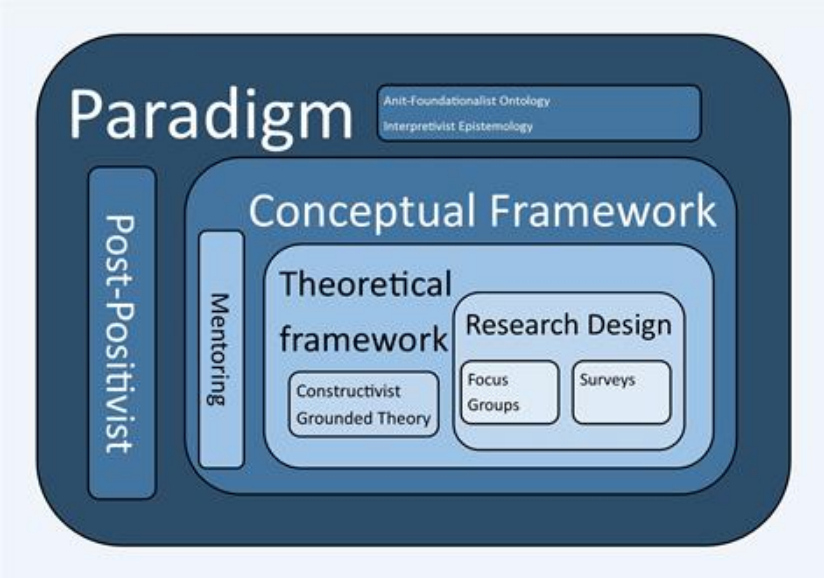
1.9 Thesis Structure

Chapter Two, a review of the literature will follow the introduction, and definitions of key terms used in the study. The initial focus of Chapter Two is the context of mentoring, within the field of provider-led ITE, to foreground the study. The role of the mentor is then considered which highlights the complexities of this multi-faceted role. Once the background and the nature of the role itself has been addressed then participants' expectations of each other, and the process, are examined. This will then allow for a comparison, later in the thesis, with the lived experiences, arising from the data collected. As the study is looking to identify potential areas of tension then an examination of the key complexities and challenges of the process, already identified in the literature, was conducted. At this point, a range of models of mentoring, in existence from 1988 onwards, were considered in the light of the context of ITE. These models are on the mentoring model paradigm spectrum (Kochan and Pascarelli, 2012) from traditional models, based on notions of apprenticeship (O'Hear, 1988; The Hillgate group, 1989) to those which are transformative in nature

(Lofthouse, 2018). Given that the study's ultimate aim was to construct a conceptual framework to underpin a model of mentoring, it was necessary to examine the models for mentoring which are already in existence so that the study was able to work towards adding to the body of knowledge, rather than replicating it. The chapter is brought to a close with a synthesis of the ideas discussed, to suggest potential ways forward.

Chapter Three, dealing with the study's methodology follows. In section 3.4 Conceptualisation of the Methodological Approach (p105) I use a model (Figure 13, p107) to assist in clearly articulating my stance and approach to the project. Figure 1 below represents a synopsis of the research design and methods to then be discussed within the methodology chapter, in section 3.8 Synopsis of the Research Design and Methods (p121):

Figure 1: Synopsis of the research design and methods



My ontological stance was anti-foundationalist, being aligned with the understanding that

> not all social phenomena are directly observable; structures exist that cannot be observed and those that can may not present the social and political world as it actually is
> (Marsh and Smith, 2001, p530)

Given that what I came to know what I knew, at the outset of my project, was based on my interpretations of my own experiences then my epistemological stance was interpretivist. My

ontological and epistemological stances supported a post-positivist paradigm which underpinned my desire to not only illuminate and understand what was happening, within the mentoring process, but also to offer an explanation, leading to informed ways forward.

To gather a broad and balanced perspective of the mentoring process I gathered students' views, using a survey as a data gathering tool, from two initial teacher education cohorts. One cohort being undergraduates and the other post graduates. I used focus group discussions, as data gathering tools, with two groups of school-based mentors.

Given that I was a 'researching professional' there were particular ethical considerations to be taken account of, associated with 'insider research', these are discussed throughout the methodology chapter.

The presentation and initial discussion of data constitute Chapter Four. Arising themes are discussed in turn, and the chapter is brought to a close with participants' suggestions for ways forward. Where helpful, the arising themes in that chapter are preceded by a visual representation of the appropriate data. This aims to make particular aspects of rafts of unwieldy data more accessible to the reader.

In Chapter Five the findings are discussed further and synthesised, to foreground the development of the conceptual framework. The literature is revisited here to critically situate the resulting framework, within the existing models. In doing so, the concluding chapter of the study will be contextualised effectively.

Finally, Chapter Six, the conclusion, brings the threads together. The concluding chapter makes explicit how the study's aims and the research questions were addressed. The significance and implications of the findings are considered before making explicit the study's contribution to knowledge, the most significant contribution being the Conceptual Framework to Underpin a Model of Mentoring see Figure 32 (p218). Limitations of the framework and the study are considered with implications for further research bringing the chapter, and thesis, to a close.

1.10 Definitions of Key Terms

1.10.1 Coaching

'The terms 'mentoring' and 'coaching' are used differently across different cultures, professions and settings' (Lofthouse, 2019) so consequently there is space for different understandings of both terms. In this piece the term mentoring includes a mentor's potential use of coaching. In line with Hobson et al (2016, p2) my understanding is that coaching would be an aspect of mentoring, with a tighter focus. 'Coaching tends to have a narrower remit [than mentoring] relating to specific areas of performance and learning outcomes' (Jones, 2015, p294) and is usually 'considered as being more about personal professional development' (Lofthouse, 2019). An area of commonality shared by coaching and mentoring is that they have the potential to allow for appropriate spaces for professional conversations (Lofthouse and Thomas, 2017). Given this, the term mentoring is used, in this piece, to encompass mentors' potential use of coaching.

1.10.2 Initial Teacher Education and Student Teachers

My stance is aligned with that of Lofthouse (2018, p249) when she said:

> The terms initial teacher "training" (ITT) rather than ITE and "trainees" rather than "student teachers" are now routinely adopted in England. While there is no standard way of defining ITT compared to ITE, some people (myself included) do believe that the language of training rather than education is potentially reductive. In this paper, I will use the term student teacher to include those referred to as trainees in England and "pre-service teachers" or "interns" in other international contexts, and also ITE (rather than ITT)

1.10.3 Link Tutor

The link tutor is a university member of staff who has the responsibility of being the 'link' between the student teacher, mentor, school hosting the placement and the university. The link tutor also has a quality assurance role and undertakes activities such as jointly observing a student teacher teaching and feeding back to that student teacher, with the school-based mentor.

1.10.4 [School-based] Mentor

The mentor is a school-based colleague who works in the school hosting the student teacher's placement. As defined by the DfE (2016, p7) the mentor is 'a suitably-experienced teacher who has formal responsibility to work collaboratively within the ITT partnership to help ensure the trainee receives the highest-quality training'

1.10.5 Mentoring

In this research project the definition of 'mentoring' used is Hobson's (2016, p89):

> a one-to-one relationship between a relatively inexperienced teacher (the mentee) and a relatively experienced teacher (the mentor), which aims to support the mentee's learning, development and well-being, and their integration into the cultures of both the organisation in which they are employed and the wider profession

This builds explicitly on earlier definitions such as 'the support given by one (usually more experienced) person for the growth and learning of another, and for their integration into and acceptance by a specific community' (Malderez, 2001, p. 57). The significant addition in Hobson's definition is the explicit reference to the need to support a mentee's well-being.

1.10.6 Provider

The provider is an institute of higher education (HEI) which runs provider-led Initial Teacher Training (ITT) (DfE, 2019d).

1.10.7 Teacher Educator

The teacher educator is a university lecturer who teaches students whilst they are engaged with their university-based education.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Using Hart's (2018, p14) working definition of a literature review as an 'analysis, critical evaluation and synthesis of existing knowledge relevant to your research problem' the focus was narrowed from initially searching for literature around the overarching theme of students making the transition from student to teacher to literature which specifically addressed the study's aims, introduced earlier in 1.6 Research Aims (p22) and replicated here as a reminder:

- explore the mentor-student relationship within assessed school-based placements on a University-based ITE provider's (University X) Initial Teacher Education Programmes, in the northeast of England
- identify and explore the features of what students, and school-based mentors, perceive to be effective mentoring
- identify the barriers to effective mentoring
- develop a conceptual framework, emerging from the data, which would underpin a model of mentoring to support students in the mentoring process and in turn support mentors in achieving 'mentor standards' (TSC, 2016)

The chapter opens with a consideration of the wider context of mentoring within ITE, to situate the aims of the study effectively. This establishes a shared understanding of the specific context of mentoring within 'provider-led ITT' (DfE, 2019), the context in which the research is located. Once the understanding of the wider context is established then the range of understandings of the role of the mentor are analysed and evaluated. That, coupled with an examination of the expectations of the mentoring experience, from the perspectives of both mentors and mentees, will address the aim of 'identify and explore the features of what students, and school-based mentors, perceive to be effective mentoring'. At this point, barriers to effective mentoring which have already been identified in mentoring literature are explored. As one of the study's aims is to develop a conceptual framework, to underpin a model of mentoring, it was necessary to research mentoring models which were already in existence. Consequently, the final theme is a scrutiny of a range of models of mentoring which appeared in mentoring literature. Most of these models were in the field of ITE but

some from other areas were drawn upon. Looking beyond the field of ITE highlighted aspects of mentoring which were inherent in ITE structures, due to the context and requirements peculiar to that area. It was seen that this particular context and ITE's requirements construct distinct barriers to practitioners in the field from making use of aspects of good mentoring practice in other areas. The chapter concludes with a speculative look to the future, synthesising existing knowledge in the light of the Early Career Framework (DfE, 2019b), towards the development of a conceptual framework to underpin a model of mentoring, the study's final aim.

2.1 Context of Mentoring within 'provider led ITT' (DfE, 2019)

Mentoring is a strategy that is used in the school-based education of student teachers (DfE, 2016; Izadinia, 2015; Lofthouse, 2018; Mackie, 2018) with a student teacher being understood to be a person who is still enrolled on a teaching programme and is not yet a qualified teacher. In the context of ITE, mentoring takes place during school-based placements where student teachers (mentees) are placed with classroom teachers ([school-based] mentors) to help them in making links between theory and practice and to develop their teaching skills (Ambrosetti et al., 2014). Across the placement, the mentor oversees the mentee and their development during that time. Mentoring in the ITE context is a relationship, formally arranged, where student teachers are placed with school-based mentors with whom they usually have had no prior experiences (Ambrosetti et al., 2014).

The ITE provider arranges the placement with the host school and the host school would place the incoming student teachers with their mentors. A member of staff within the school, usually the 'ITE co-ordinator', would have overall responsibility for the student teachers in school. This process appears straightforward but the fact that securing school placements for student teachers is often difficult (Lofthouse, 2018) signals initial tensions before the mentoring relationship is even established. If it is difficult to secure a placement for a student teacher then it must follow that some schools are 'persuaded' to take students on placement

and therefore individual teachers must also be persuaded to mentor a student teacher. Teachers are pressed for time, as indicated by the Government's explicit drive to reducing school workload (DfE, 2019e). They will be acutely aware of the time it takes to mentor a student teacher and so it is understandable that they may not come forward to volunteer for the role. It would subsequently be hard for a class teacher to approach the mentoring process positively if they felt that they had been either, at best, persuaded to take on the role or, at worst, directed to. It must also be uncomfortable to be mentored if you are able to sense that your mentor had not fully embraced the role.

Once a student is placed in a school then that placement can be task orientated and the mentor teacher, on behalf of the provider, usually assesses the student teacher's performance (Lofthouse, 2018). There is evidence (Clutterbuck, 2004; Hobson and Malderez, 2013) which suggests that a mentor being responsible for the assessment of the mentee compromises the mentoring relationship as it works against the construction of a pro-mentoring context (Hobson, 2016). Given that the mentor is usually required to assess their mentee then the role of mentor often involves a supervisory role (Hobson and Malderez, 2013), where a mentor will often assign a grade to the student teacher's performance during the placement. This arrangement, where a mentor is also responsible for assessing a student, clearly also creates a challenging context for the development of a trusting relationship between a mentor and a mentee where, for example, a mentee could be open in sharing their perceived areas for development and in seeking support.

The school-based placement generally occurs for a block period, of up to ten weeks. Traditionally, during the placement it is expected that student teachers engage in activities, required by the teacher education programme, such as observing and reflecting as well as planning and teaching. In this situation, as described by Ambrosetti (2014, p227) student teachers would typically:

- observe their mentor teacher and watch them teach, interact with pupils, parents and other staff, organize and manage the classroom and pupils;

- develop learning experiences for pupils which are implemented within the professional placement classroom;
- experiment with teaching strategies and approaches;
- interact with the pupils within the classroom;
- engage in discussions that focus on teaching strategies, the pupils in the classroom and feedback; and
- reflect on learning experience implementation.

Student teachers at the beginning of their teaching programme may engage in tasks such as observing and teaching small groups of pupils, whereas a student teacher who is nearing the end of their programme will engage to a greater degree in planning and teaching more independently as well as managing the classroom and the pupils. The mentoring process is clearly intense given the amount of work to be done with the need for mentoring around these tasks and then subsequent competencies to be observed. In addition to mentoring a student through, and supervising, this list of tasks the progress of the children cannot be hindered. A mentor has an immediate dual responsibility and a potential conflict of interests. I would suggest that this process is particularly intense within the context of Primary ITE where a mentee and a mentor would be spending significant periods of time together with one class of children. The stakes must be particularly high in a primary setting for both the mentor and the mentee, as the role is usually taken by one member of staff and it is the same class of children who are being taught by the student teacher. It becomes clear that it is crucial for a positive working relationship to be established between the student teacher and the class teacher, to ensure progress for that one class of children is maintained.

Considering the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011, p10) student teachers, in England, in addition to working against that list of competencies, are expected to work within a framework where:

> Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils

This moves beyond a list of activities which a student teacher may be engaged in to encompass how a student teacher should 'be' (Stephen, 2010) on placement. The mentor would not only need to engage with what their mentee needs 'to do' but how they need 'to be'. The impact of this for a mentee is that often a mentor will be commenting on personal aspects of their very being, aspects such as their use of body language and spoken language, in addition to their ability to teach; we know that receiving personal feedback can be damaging for an individual depending on how that feedback is handled by the giver (Timostsuk and Ugaste, 2010, p1566). The impact for the mentor is that they might find themselves in the uncomfortable position of giving a difficult message to a student.

From considering the broad Primary ITE mentoring context within this study sits it is immediately clear that there are aspects which contribute to an 'anti-mentoring context' (Malderez, 2015). The significant aspects that might foster tension within the process from the very outset being related to:

- a lack of schools and teachers proactively seeking to mentor, perhaps related to school and teacher workload issues or to the pressure to maintain their children's progress
- the challenge of a mentor also being the assessor
- the number of tasks to be undertaken by the student teacher, all of which require a level of mentoring and in many cases, supervision and assessment by the mentor
- a mentor not only being responsible for the progress of the student teacher but also being responsible for the progress of the children who are working with the student teacher
- a mentor having to guide a student in how 'to be' in addition to what 'to do' and subsequently having to deliver feedback related to personal attributes, not just a student's practice

2.2 The Role of the Mentor

For a student teacher 'the most obvious and important transition is the change from a relative novice into a knowledgeable, skilled participant of a discipline' (Hussey and Smith, 2010, p157). To make the successful transition from 'student' to 'teacher' a student is

mentored whilst in schools practising their teaching (Ambrosetti (2017); DfE (2016); Hobson et al. (2009); Lofthouse (2018)).

The term ‘mentor’ originates from Homer’s ‘The Odyssey’ (Cochran–Smith and Paris cited in Smyth 1995, p181). Mentor is entrusted with the household when Odysseus sets sail for Troy and also to take care of his son, Telemachus. Mentor persuades, directly instructs and takes over when necessary, ‘to keep the household intact’. This perception of mentoring is interesting because its prime concern is to make sure those things ‘stay the same’, the status quo is upheld and the boat is not rocked. The skills of an effective mentor needed here are those which would ensure the status quo and so the ability to persuade, directly instruct and to know when to take over are skills which would help to ensure that the mentee followed directly in the footsteps of the mentor and adopted the same behaviour or approach. Birrell (2013) suggests that a mentor should facilitate the qualities in their mentee of open mindedness, being comfortable with revealing uncertainty, asking questions and instigating change and that these are qualities that we would want to see in mentees. This view clearly does not subscribe to the notion of needing to keep things the same in an organisation. This does contrast directly with the original meaning of the term where the desirable attributes of a mentor would not elicit the desirable qualities which Birrell would look to promote in a mentee. Malderez (2001, p57) defines mentoring as ‘the support given by one (usually more experienced) person for the growth and learning of another, and for the integration into and acceptance by a specific community’. Hobson et al. (2009, p207) expand upon Malderez’s understanding with their definition of mentoring being ‘the one-to-one support of a novice or less experienced practitioner (mentee) by a more experienced practitioner (mentor)’ in order ‘to assist the development of the mentee’s expertise and to facilitate their induction into the culture of the profession’. Although both definitions assert that the mentor would be the more experienced in the relationship Hobson et al. (2009) recognise the mentee as already having some expertise and therefore someone with potential to contribute something new. If a mentee’s experience is recognised then this

suggests that this is something to be valued and that the mentee would have something to contribute to the mentoring process. It should be appropriate for a mentee to be encouraged to demonstrate their skills and attributes by using their initiative in practice which in turn may well, by its very nature, instigate some organisational change. The idea of potential change is supported by Hudson (2013, p774) who suggests that 'mentoring necessitates clear articulation of expectations and practices, as well as providing the mentee with various viewpoints about teaching.' If different viewpoints were provided then the implication would be that the mentee should be able to select which viewpoint is more closely aligned with their pedagogy rather than teach in 'one way' to keep the status quo intact. The potential for a mentee to influence future practice in an organisation is clear. This relies on a mentor being receptive to new ideas and being open to the suggestion that they might further develop their own practice as the result of the mentoring process. This further development would not be restricted to aspects associated with becoming a more effective mentor but also related to aspects of their own teaching practice. If a mentor is not open to change within their own practice then the original apprenticeship model of mentoring would naturally be adopted. Consequently, mentoring in that context would involve persuasion, direct instruction and knowledge about when to take over, to ensure continuity. This would keep the mentoring process trapped in the bubble of that singular mentoring relationship, not allowing it to drive any change in practice.

2.3 Initial Expectations of the Mentoring Experience

At the heart of the teaching experience is the relationship between mentor teachers and student teachers (Caruso 2000). The process of student teachers being mentored, whilst on placement, is well established (Lofthouse, 2018). Since the early 1990s students have spent two thirds of their initial teacher training programmes in schools, being supported by practising teachers who take the role of mentor (Hobson et al, 2009). In April 2014, the Secretary of State for Education asked Sir Andrew Carter to undertake an independent

review of initial teacher training (ITT) (Carter, 2015).The Carter Review of Initial Teacher Training (Carter, 2015, p3) which 'champions the role of the school-based mentor, who is clearly essential for successful school-led ITT' subsequently made 17 recommendations including:

> Recommendation 12: DfE should commission a sector body, for example the Teaching Schools Council, to develop some national standards for mentors. These would be used for self-evaluation and would not be mandatory. These would be designed to create a shared understanding of good mentoring.
>
> (Carter, 2015, p6)

The 'National Standards for school-based initial teacher training (ITT) mentors' were subsequently published by the DfE in 2016 in an effort to create that shared understanding of a mentor's role and to 'bring greater coherence and consistency to the school-based mentoring arrangements for trainee teachers' (DfE, 2016, p3). Although welcomed as an acknowledgement of the importance of the role of the mentor in a student's transition to teacher the guidance was overdue. A decade earlier there was evidence that mentors demonstrated a range of types of interaction with their mentees from highly supportive to laissez-faire which contributed to the quality of outcomes for students (O'Brien and Goddard, 2006). This was confirmed to still be the case within mentoring practice at the time when the mentors' standards (TSC, 2016) were published, Manning and Hobson (2017, p1) stated that there was still evidence of 'distinct discrepancy between the perceptions of mentors and mentees regarding the nature of the mentoring experience'. An explicit shared understanding of the role of the mentor would equalize mentors' and students' expectations of what it means to mentor and to be mentored and work to alleviate those areas of tension (Izadinia, 2016) arising from the mismatches in understanding. It also needs to be considered that as the mentors' standards (TSC, 2016) were non-statutory then there would be no insistence that they were adhered to by mentors. At best the mentors' standards (TSC, 2016) would be read by a mentor but by making them non-statutory their importance would not be fundamentally communicated to school-based colleagues struggling to mentor

effectively (Jerome and Brook, 2020) in their performative work culture (Lofthouse and Thomas, 2014).

The 'National Standards for school-based initial teacher training (ITT) mentors' (DfE, 2016, p10) comprised of four separate yet related standards for mentors:

> Standard 1 - Personal qualities
> *Establish trusting relationships, modelling high standards of practice, and empathising with the challenges a trainee faces.*
>
> Standard 2 – Teaching
> *Support trainees to develop their teaching practice in order to set high expectations and to meet the needs of all pupils.*
>
> Standard 3 – Professionalism
> *Induct the trainee into professional norms and values, helping them to understand the importance of the role and responsibilities of teachers in society.*
>
> Standard 4 – Self-development and working in partnership
> *Continue to develop their own professional knowledge, skills and understanding and invest time in developing a good working relationship within relevant ITT partnerships.*

The guidance is clear, straightforward and, on the surface, makes transparent the role of the mentor and consequently what can be expected of a school-based mentor by a mentee. However, the process of mentoring is clearly not as straightforward as it would appear from the DfE's (2016) guidance. As 'mentoring relationships are conceptualized as close relationships that occur along a spectrum from highly functional to highly dysfunctional, with most occurring in between' (Gormley, 2008, p45) then they are inherently complex. Clutterbuck (2004) talks about mentoring being a holistic role which requires the skills and attributes of a counsellor, guide, networker and coach; giving an indication of the role's complexity. The suggestion that the role of the mentor is straightforward sets up both mentees and mentors to fail unless the associated variables happen to be conducive to a positive mentoring experience.

It is generally accepted that most trainees go through several different stages during their school- based training. Furlong and Maynard (1995, pp41-42) proposed five stages:

Stage 1: Idealism
Students are often highly idealistic before training begins

Stage 2: Survival
Feeling as though there's just too much to cope with and remember

Stage 3: Dealing with Problems
The focus for reflection will depend on the challenges faced

Stage 4: Plateauing
Becoming complacent

Stage 5: Moving on

Before training begins, at Stage 1, students are often highly idealistic thus it is in this frame of mind that students will approach meeting their initial mentors. Students will have looked at the set of standards for mentors outlined above and these would contribute to their expectations of their forthcoming experience of the mentoring process. Consequently, students would be expecting their experience of being mentored to be straightforward and positive. The standards for mentors are not set out in a way which encourages a reader to make links between them and looking at the guidance, the complexities of the mentoring process are not immediately obvious. As an example of the mentors' standards appearing straightforward, they stipulate that a mentor needs to 'invest time' in the process. However, there are several competing school demands on a mentor which would affect their actions (Valencia, Martin, Peace and Grossman, 2009) which a student teacher embarking on placement would not be immediately aware of. In addition to expecting their mentors to have time for them, students would also be idealistic about how mentors would *be* with them. According to O'Brien and Christie (2005) mentees look for both professional and personal qualities in their mentors, they expect to be mentored by an experienced teacher who will nurture, advise and encourage them in the practical aspects of learning to teach. In terms of the professional qualities looked for, there is scope for confusion around the term 'experienced'. According to the DfE (2016, p7) 'A mentor is a suitably experienced teacher' but it is not clear if this means being experienced as a mentor or as a teacher. If the experience cited as being needed is that of being a teacher then there is surely an assumption by the DfE that the skills needed to mentor are those which every teacher will

possess. There are clearly transferable skills between teaching and mentoring, for instance, teachers may often model processes to their pupils and model practice to their mentees. It does not necessarily stand, however, that an experienced teacher is an effective mentor (Evertson and Smithey, 2000) as there are skills which are distinct to mentoring. Mentoring is a profession within a profession (Lofthouse and Hall, 2013) is about much more than passing on the day-to-day practicalities of the role of the teacher, 'mentoring relationships can be powerful and life-changing events in people's lives' (Hansman,2003, p14), so it cannot be left to assumption that all experienced teachers possess the necessary skills to mentor effectively.

At the outset of their training students cannot be fully aware of the pivotal role their relationship with their mentor will have on their transition from student to teacher. As Stanulis and Russell (2000) identified trust and communication as being integral to a successful mentoring relationship then Standard 1, which is concerned with 'Personal Qualities', might be the fundamental standard to address as it potentially underpins the remaining three and will impact significantly upon the success of that relationship. The pragmatic aspects of placement, as acknowledged by Hudson (2013, p3), are straightforward to impart to both students and mentors as this is information sharing, there is little requirement for any depth of thought or reflection. However, careful consideration needs to be given to preparing students and mentors to engage in trusting relationships and effective communication as these elements are cited as crucial to a successful process. Initially, students can be primarily concerned with being inducted into the professional norms of the school where they are placed and about the practical knowledge needed in preparation for a placement in that setting (e.g. what clothes to wear, timings of the working day) perhaps in an effort to 'fit in' as soon as possible. Perhaps because students are largely idealistic at the outset (Maynard and Furlong, 1995) they do not think critically about how the relationship with their mentor might develop or what the impact of that relationship might be on their training. The

apparently straightforward mentor standards (TSC, 2016) would only cement this initial perception by a student embarking upon a placement for the first time.

Mentors also have expectations of the mentoring process. They look for particular desirable attributes in their mentees; enthusiasm for teaching, being personable for relationship building, commitment to children and their learning, being lifelong learners, being able to reflect on constructive feedback, having the capability to be resilient and taking responsibility for their learning (Hudson, 2013). It does not seem from Hudson's (2013) research that mentors are looking for expertise in a mentee at the outset but that they are looking for mentees to have the attributes which will help them learn how to be an effective teacher. When students embark on placement they work to meet the expectations of what makes a professional teacher. They face constant dilemmas such as; feeling like a student while being expected to act like a teacher, wanting to care for pupils while being expected to be tough, and feeling incompetent in their subject knowledge while being expected to behave like an expert (Volkmann and Anderson, 1998) yet it does not appear that this is really what mentors expect of them initially. Mentees may perceive that mentors are looking for different things, such as expertise, to those identified above by Hudson (2013) and so it would be important to share expectations explicitly at the outset to avoid the mismatches of expectations which can foster tension in the relationship (Izadinia, 2016).

As the student embarks on their placement they will need to know how their mentor teachers define a professional mentoring relationship and what expectations they have (Izadinia, 2016, p388). Initially students may well be making assumptions about professional expectations and how the mentoring relationship will be, based on the standards for mentors (TSC, 2016). However, as mentoring is an interpersonal process, each of the individuals determines the development of the relationship and the outcomes achieved (Ambrosetti et al., 2017). This adds both a personal and emotional dimension to the guidance (TSC, 2016) which, on the surface, appears straightforward, particularly to the idealistic student. Unless the mentor is explicit with the student in sharing their personal understanding of the role of

the mentor the student will naturally rely on their own perceptions and the published guidance which may or may not reflect fully the mentor's perception of the role.

2.4 Key Complexities and Challenges of the Mentoring Process

On reviewing the literature around mentoring in ITE some key complexities and challenges became evident. It became clear that 'Judgementoring' (Hobson and Malderez, 2013) was a particular feature of the accepted overarching structure of mentoring within ITE (Lofthouse, 2018), where the mentor is responsible for assessing their mentee. However, this is problematic in establishing open and trusting relationships between the participants (Clutterbuck, 2004; Hobson & McIntyre, 2013). Giving and receiving formal feedback is a central aspect of a judgementoring structure as students assessed by a mentor would expect to know how they had performed, in order to know what their mentor was looking for in their next episode of teaching. Although students value feedback, and view it as essential to their progress (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Christensen, 1988), several challenges were apparent in terms of *what* feedback is given (Daloz, 1986) and *how* it is given (Timostsuk & Ugaste, 2010). The notion of a mentor being responsible for assessing their mentee clearly indicates that the mentor holds the power in the relationship (Hudson, 2016). It was also noted that there appears to be little value attached to the mentee's potential contribution (TSC, 2016) to the relationship and this must further contribute to a mentee's feeling of unimportance and impotence. The power dynamic, within the mentoring relationship, has a significant impact on how the relationship is established and developed. Ultimately, within such a powerful relationship there are significant challenges associated with how a mentee could establish their own professional identity (Oliver, 1991). The complexities and challenges identified seemed to centre around an implicit need to maintain existing practice and thus actively avoid any transformation of that practice.

2.4.1 ‘Judgementoring’ (Hobson and Malderez, 2013)

Although we know that mentoring is a ‘familiar practice’ (Lofthouse, 2018, p250) in the training of teachers there are apparent contradictions in understandings of the term. Ambrosetti et al (2017, p43) noted that the terms mentoring and supervising are used interchangeably, this is not helpful as:

> a mentoring approach differs to a supervisory approach in that mentoring provides supportive, but challenging learning opportunities for the preservice teacher to develop their professional selves through reflective practices.
>
> (Ambrosetti et al., 2017, p43)

However, as mentors take responsibility for assessing students on behalf of the ITE provider (Lofthouse, 2018, p250) then mentoring in the ITE context incorporates supervisory elements. A mentoring approach should cater for a mentee’s needs and learning opportunities should be negotiated between the mentor and the mentee, a supervisory approach is task focussed and couched in assessment (Ambrosetti, 2017). However, as the familiar practice of mentoring is indeed couched in assessment then the mentor is supervising the student. Bradbury and Koballa (2008) recognised that the opposing tensions of the roles within mentoring can put mentors and student teachers into confusing and untenable positions. In addition, as we know that ‘understanding roles through clear expectations can assist mentees to engage more purposefully in schools’ (Hudson, 2013, p3) then misunderstanding roles must hinder students from being able to engage purposefully. The vocabulary around the role seems to have changed from ‘supervisory’ (The Hillgate group, 1989; O’Hear, 1988) to ‘mentoring’ (TSC, 2016) but what happens within that role seems to have remained largely the same across three decades, as mentors still supervise and assess their mentees. Clutterbuck (2004, p13) defined mentoring as ‘Off-line help from one person to another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking’, ‘off-line’ meaning that the mentor could not be a mentee’s line manager. In a relationship where one has power over the other then the agenda followed is more likely to

be that of the power holder, and supervisor, as we might see in Homer's original 'Mentor'. In 2013, Hobson and Malderez identified a particular type of institution-based mentoring practice, apparent in the teaching profession, which was termed 'judgementoring' and they defined this as:

> a one to one relationship between a relatively inexperienced teacher (the mentee) and a relatively experienced one (the mentor) in which the latter, in revealing too readily and/or too often her/his own judgements on or evaluations of the mentee's planning and teaching (e.g. through 'comments', 'feedback', advice, praise or criticism), compromises the mentoring relationship and its potential benefits.
>
> Hobson & Malderez (2013, p.90)

Hobson et al (2016, p13) stated that judgementoring compromises the mentoring process as there is no 'safe space' where mentees may speak openly without feeling that this may reflect on them negatively or be perceived as a 'black mark' (Hobson & McIntyre, 2013). Mentees might find it problematic to share what they perceive to be an area of weakness to seek support but instead might even try to disguise this area to hide it from their mentor (Hobson, 2016). If the mentee is being mentored by the person who is also responsible for assessing then there is a distinct possibility that the mentee would be inclined to mimic the mentor's practice under the assumption that this is the practice most approved of and therefore that which would attract the most positive feedback and grade. In conversations about practice it would be difficult for a student to articulate their pedagogy if it was different to that of their assessor for fear of this affecting any subsequent outcomes or appearing critical in any way. The DfE's (2016, p7) mentor definition describes the functional role but gives no indication as to how the role would be effectively carried out, there could be multiple approaches which could be covered under its umbrella and therefore how to do it effectively is open to interpretation. The DfE's (2016) definition did not explicitly acknowledge that, in teaching, the mentor is often responsible for judging the mentee's performance as indicated by Hobson and Malderez (2013) but the implication is clearly there. Being judged and mentored by the same person may not encourage any development of practice but rather

the emulation of the mentor's practice and ultimately maintenance of the status quo in the setting. These are ideas which will be explored further in the Models of Mentoring section.

2.4.2 Giving and Receiving Feedback

The challenges surrounding clear communication would be inherent within any feedback given by the mentor to the mentee. Studies by Beck and Kosnik (2002) and Christensen (1988) found that student teachers had high regard for feedback and viewed it as an essential part of the placement experience. Antonek, McCormick & Donato (1997) identified reflection as a key component associated with the concept of self; by speaking about the self it stands to reason that there has to be a certain level of reflection. To then develop the self as a teacher Antonek et al. (1997) emphasized the need to develop reflective skills and the students should allow these reflections to impact upon their future practice. A mentor observing a student and in a position to feedback is in an excellent position to help develop those reflective skills in a novice teacher as they discuss the student's practice but the added responsibility of assessing the student will affect how honest the student may feel they can be during these sessions (Hobson et al, 2016). Daloz (1986) states that if support is low and challenge is high, a novice teacher will withdraw from learning. It is crucial therefore that any feedback given needs to be supportive and the challenges which are then set are appropriate and achievable. The balance of power is crucial at this point in that targets set by a mentor after feedback may be thought to be achievable but unless the student feels empowered they will not feel in a position to contribute to their own target setting and be confident that the level of challenge is not too high.

The way in which feedback given is critical, as it is apparent that feedback can often elicit a highly emotional response from a student; for example, Timostsuk and Ugaste (2010 p1566) found that some students experienced setbacks that caused a strong emotional response. Their negative emotions were especially strong if they did not completely understand the reason for failure e.g. negative feedback from supervisors who criticized shortcomings

without any reason being given as to why the student was perceived as at fault. This underpins the necessity for mentors to be trained in the giving of feedback not only to ensure that it is effective in supporting a mentee to progress in their practice but to ensure that it does not work to damage the mentoring relationship. Du Toit (2006, p53) suggests 'In order to develop self-awareness the individual must have access to honest feedback' which is necessary but this feedback needs to be delivered in a particular way which looks to maintain the mentee's self-esteem. In addition, for a mentee to value a mentor's feedback the mentee must respect their mentor (Garvey et al., 2018, p129) which underlines the need for the formation of a positive relationship from the outset.

Stanulis and Russell (2000) identified trust and communication as important in effective mentoring. This has implications for not only the general development of the most constructive relationships between mentor and student but in turn for feedback. They realised (2000, p78) 'that unless we are also willing to expose our own vulnerabilities, we unconsciously engage in behaviours that safeguard our privileged positions'. Perhaps a useful way forward in a mentoring process would be for a mentor to invite feedback from their student about their own practice. An openness to receiving constructive feedback, in addition to a willingness to provide it, is clearly part of a two-way relationship (Rush et al,. 2008, cited in Hudson, 2013). This approach would necessitate the need for mentors to be confident in articulating their own practices and beliefs, be willing to discuss these and ultimately be prepared to be challenged about their practice. This small act would remind mentors of how it is to receive feedback and allow that to impact upon their own practice.

2.4.3 Valuing a Mentee's Contribution

According to the DfE (2016, p7) a mentor would 'help ensure the trainee receives the highest-quality training'. The use of the word 'receives' within the definition is particularly important to note as it suggested that the trainee is 'a vessel to be filled' rather than an active participant who may have positive things to offer either the process or the

organisation. ‘Receiving’ training does not require any level of discussion or contribution from the mentee but instead would require the mentee to listen, take note and do things in a prescribed way, in sympathy with a supervisory approach (The Hillgate Group, 1989; O’Hear, 1988). This was in direct contrast with the views of Cochran–Smith and Paris (in Smyth, 1995, p187) who believed that mentoring was about the ‘the joint work of more and less experienced teachers rather than the delivery of knowledge from one to another’. The implication here was that mentees have a proactive role to play rather than a reactive role; there would be space, for example, for joint ventures and the social construction of knowledge. The mentee would have some status in a relationship such as this and their abilities would be valued as it would be recognised that they could bring something to the venture, rather than just be the recipient of the mentor’s expertise.

It needs to be recognised that many students enrol on a teacher training programme having already worked in previous contexts where they had particular responsibilities. If we assume that the success of the mentoring relationship lies entirely with the mentor then we negate any previous experience the mentee might have and put them into a passive role immediately. Reinforcing this notion, the standards for mentors (TSC, 2016) made explicit the need for the mentor to establish trusting relationships and empathise with the challenges a trainee faces (DfE, 2016, p11). At no point was there any reference to what the mentee might bring, the guidance was based around how the mentor might impart their knowledge effectively. This was in sharp contrast to the understanding of a mentoring relationship being a complex interpersonal process (Hobson et al., 2009). As there was no acknowledgement of what the mentee might or might not bring to the relationship, the success of a mentoring relationship again seemed to be placed within the remit of the mentor. This would only serve to reinforce the assumption that the mentor was the instrumental participant in the mentoring process who had something to offer. It would seem, therefore, that we are missing the opportunity to consider what a mentee can bring to the process, in not doing this a mentee’s skills and attributes are not appreciated or utilised effectively, this renders them unimportant.

2.4.4 Establishing and Maintaining the Relationship

We know that the mentee/mentor relationship is central (Caruso, 2000) to student teaching experiences, which are in turn considered the most influential components of a teacher education programme (Izadinia, 2016). It therefore follows that for a student to be as successful as possible within their placements then their relationship with their mentor also needs to be as positive as possible as soon as possible. The DfE (2016, p7) acknowledged that schools have a role to play in supporting both mentors and students by creating and fostering a positive environment in which mentors and students are able to fulfil their professional expectations. In addition to mentors establishing trusting relationships it is imperative that mentees learn how to develop positive relationships in this context as 'positive relationships are pivotal for advancing any organization' (Hudson, 2016, p41) and it does not seem reasonable, or possible, for the responsibility for the creation of a positive relationship between two people to lie with just one of them. Bottoms et al. (2013) found that it is advantageous for newly qualified teachers to make strong ties with their mentors, which would give them access to their mentors' resources and information. Krackhardt (1992) suggested that strong ties are founded on three factors: (a) affection, (b) interaction, and (c) time. Krackhardt (1992) asserted with regard to time, the longer the relationship between two individuals, the stronger their bond but this must only be the case if the mentor/mentee relationship is positive, I would suggest that if the relationship is not positive that the longer it is maintained then the more destructive it could become and so it is imperative to get this relationship right from the outset. The willingness of each participant to engage (Hobson et al., 2009) would impact upon the initial stages in the development of the mentoring relationship. Some studies have also suggested that successful mentoring is particularly dependent on the 'willingness' to be mentored on the part of the student teacher (Roehrig, Bohn, Turner & Pressley, 2008) which reinforces the need for student teachers to be empowered in being proactive within the process. Interestingly, the standards for mentors (TSC, 2016) did not make any mention of the importance of a mentor being willing to take up

the role, instead they talk about mentors being ‘selected’ by senior leaders within schools. In this scenario the way is laid clear for a ‘top down’ approach where a mentor is needed and subsequently selected rather than it being seen as a role which a member of staff may feel they are suited to and which they wish to work towards. Again, an idealistic student might enter placement thinking that a mentor is willing to host their placement but in fact this is often not the case, given that even securing a school placement can be challenging (Lofthouse, 2018) then a mentor can be given a student teacher when they are not proactively seeking one. As Garvey et al (2018, p126) state that ‘coaching and mentoring are essentially voluntary in nature’ then being given a student teacher would not be conducive to a mentor having a positive stance at the outset of the process.

At the early stages of placement, student teachers can clearly lack confidence, are intimidated by the challenges they face every single day and second-guess their abilities and the decisions they make (Izadinia 2016). In addition to the strong need student teachers have for learning how to teach, they need constant encouragement and emotional support to overcome feelings of self-doubt and create a positive image of the teacher they want to be (Izadinia, 2016). The literature suggests that the presence of a close emotional connection between mentor and mentee leads to better outcomes, including feelings of self-worth (DuBois and Neville, 1997; Parra et al., 2002). However, Beech and Brockbank’s (1999 in Garvey et al. (2018, pp127-128) research surrounding power, knowledge and different understandings of mentoring within mentoring relationships in the NHS described mentees rejecting the closeness of a relationship as ‘typical embarrassment of a child who is over-nurtured by an over-involved parent’. Izadinia (2016) also reflected that every comment a mentor teacher makes could leave a deep impression on a student’s attitudes and perceptions about who they are as teachers and who they want to become which underlines the necessity for mentors to know and understand their potential impact upon a student’s developing professional identity. Being in an environment where student teachers do not feel safe to open up, are intimidated by the judgements of their mentors and are constrained by

power relationships creates silence on the student's part (Patrick, 2013). Such silence due to communication problems seems to be common during placement (Albers and Goodman 1999) and given that Izadinia (2016) found that the three main components of a good mentoring relationship identified by mentors and mentees were encouragement and support, open communication and feedback then this silence is something which could cause a fundamental challenge to the development of a positive mentoring relationship.

As typically the mentor/mentee have had no previous interaction with one another (Ambrosetti et al., 2017) then they must work quickly to form that positive professional relationship, to ensure the most successful outcome. The traditional mentoring model of an experienced teacher mentoring a student teacher is still the most common form of mentoring (Ambrosetti et al., 2017). Within that model there are inequalities of power at play (Martinovic and Dlamini, 2009) so it would be challenging for a student teacher to be proactive in taking a lead in creating that positive professional relationship. If we define power as 'the ability to get someone to do something that they do not particularly want to do' (Jackson and Carter, 2000, p76), and we know that mentors are the more powerful participant, then it is understandable that the student teacher would be more likely to wait for the mentor to set the scene for how that relationship might work. However, this behaviour could be perceived by a mentor as a student being reluctant to engage. Beutel and Spooner-Lane (2009) explicitly asserted that the success of a mentoring relationship lies with the skills and expertise of the mentors. Building on this idea, Hudson (2016, p31) identified that 'Obstacles to successful mentoring relationships mainly involve a mentor's lack of support for the mentee, poor interpersonal skills, and inadequate time for two-way dialoguing.'. As Hansman (2003, p150) stated, 'mentoring is a socially constructed power relationship, and the power that mentors have and exercise within mentoring relationships can be helpful or hurtful' to the mentee. Hudson (2016, p40), when he reported that 'the mentor holds the power within the mentor–mentee relationship, especially as the mentor is employed and can dismiss the mentee from the class with good reason' went beyond consideration of a power *imbalance*.

Stating that the mentor 'holds' the power implies that the mentee actually has no power. Given that the relationship's power is weighted so heavily towards the mentor, from the outset and throughout the process, then a mentee would find it difficult to find the right place for themselves in this developing relationship and establish a proactive role. The distinct power imbalance would explain why a student may default to a passive role and whilst an experienced and willing mentor might recognise the potential cause for this uncertainty, a mentor that has not entered into this willingly or is inexperienced may misinterpret this behaviour as an unwillingness to engage. Consequently, we see how there is potential for the construction of a passive recipient in the mentee, due to the power held by their mentor. The relationship could be naturally intense and, in addition, as Birrell (2013, p129) describes: 'Mentors and mentees work within a social dimension where situations, personalities and other factors affect the process.' It is therefore important that mentors recognise the influence of the power dynamic within the relationship and the impact of the social dimension upon the process. It also needs to be acknowledged at this point that, as Mcauley (2003, p12) commented, 'power, control and resistance are inextricably intertwined' within the mentoring relationship and a mentee's resistance could be an area of friction in the relationship. Indeed, Feldman (1999, p247) asserted that 'protégés, as much as mentors, contribute to the interpersonal dynamics that result in dysfunctional outcomes, and that mentors, as well as protégés, are hurt by these destructive relationships'. Clearly, several different tensions can arise from this power imbalance. Mentees need to be equipped with the skills to manage their mentors (Maynard, 2010), and therefore the institutional process of mentoring, beyond those associated with 'resistance'. 'Resistance' is a slippery term as it is open to interpretation, it could be viewed as a passive stance or it could convey more of an active response, for instance, 'defiance' (Oliver, 1991), either perception could result in a dysfunctional outcome which damaged both mentee and mentor. If the inherent power imbalance, with its potential implications for how the nature of the relationship develops, is understood by both mentors and mentees then it would help participants reflect upon their own behaviour and actions. This would be conducive to the development of a reflexive

approach where the participants were able to demonstrate a capacity for critical self-reflection (Vivanco, 2018). If the participants were able to engage in a level of critical self-reflection then they might be more able to identify any aspects of the relationship which were dysfunctional, stemming from their own behaviour or actions, and work to address them proactively.

2.4.5 Developing a Professional Identity

Students are 'vulnerable' whilst out on placement in that they are very much the novice in an 'expert' environment and their professional identity is particularly fluid at this point as they observe other practitioners, are mentored and work to find their place (Volkmann and Anderson, 1998). Rodgers and Scott (2008, p733) also noted the fluid nature of the concept of identity, describing it as 'shifting, unstable and multiple'. Erikson (1968) suggested that identity is not something one has but something that develops during one's whole life according to the various social contexts we find ourselves in. This is supported by Gee (2001) who continued to describe it as an ongoing process, a process of interpreting oneself as a certain kind of person and being recognized as such in a given context. Consequently, not only is a mentee's professional identity being developed during the mentoring process but that of the mentor too. In relation to the multiple ways in which the role of the mentor can be implemented Dorman (2015, p143) discussed the overlap between role models and mentors. Dorman (2015) reminded us of the distinction as the mentor performs a specific function in the school, whereas, as Gibson and Cordova (1999) suggested, a role model is constructed by an individual. The original Mentor was very much a role model to be copied in that to be successful the mentee would have to mimic his behaviour to keep the 'household intact'. What sort of role model a mentor is depends on the mentor's perception of the role and also of themselves in that role, which is fluid and ever changing (Erikson, 1968; Volkmann and Anderson, 1998; Rodgers and Scott, 2008). As described by Oliver (1991, p152), organisations reproduce widely institutionalised roles, such as students and

teachers, based on conventional definitions of activities. A common strategic response to institutional processes is to acquiesce where one would imitate and comply (Oliver, 1991, p152). This supports the notion that students might try to work out the invisible, taken-for-granted norms and mimic their mentor's behaviour and actions in order to meet what they perceive to be their mentor's expectations of how a teacher is and what a teacher does. In this way a student would often replicate the kind of teaching persona of their mentor to a) ensure continuity of experience for children and b) because of the perception that such a nominal conformity would sustain the status quo and give the student chances of the best possible mark. In this way a student teacher's emerging professional identity could be significantly shaped by not only their mentor's professional identity but by the identity of the school in which they were placed.

2.5 Models of Mentoring

One of the study's aims was to develop a conceptual framework, which would underpin a model of mentoring to support students in the mentoring process and in turn support mentors in developing their own practice. As models of mentoring already exist then it was necessary, therefore, to consider a range of them to establish a clear awareness of the types of model in existence already and to begin a critical examination of current practice. Only when we examine what is already in existence will we be able to gain an understanding of which aspects of mentoring are currently supported by them. At that point, how we can address other areas, which are impacting upon the mentoring process but which are not currently identified explicitly, can be explored.

Despite the prevalence of mentors and mentoring programmes in ITE, there are multiple understandings of the exact meaning of a mentor and the role he or she is expected to play in a novice's development of knowledge, understanding, or beliefs about teaching (West, 2016, p23). To identify fundamental aspects of an effective model for mentoring and to consider pro-mentoring contexts (Malderez, 2015) a range of models of mentoring were

considered. An overview of each selected model will be provided prior to a discussion of each, thus, the discussion will be developed from model to model. Eight of the ten studies reviewed lie within the field of education. The recommendations from Hobson et al.'s (2016) Mapping Across the Professions research project have also been considered, which 'sought to establish what teacher mentoring stakeholders might learn from successful and effective practice in other sectors – in the UK and internationally' (p.1), along with those from Cochran et al.'s (2017) Effective Mentoring model, situated in the area of health. This was to consider what best practice might look like in other domains and to consider any elements of that practice which might be transferable to a model of mentoring within the context of ITE. The models selected arose from my research and some were referred to by others (Bird and Hudson, 2015; Mackie, 2018; Maynard and Furlong, 1995) working in the field of mentoring within education and which were constructed to either support student teachers or beginning teachers. I also focussed on those models which were looking at the generic aspects of teaching, rather than those with a specific focus e.g., although I have drawn on some of the ideas of Duckworth and Maxwell (2015) related to notions of empowerment I have not included their resulting model of mentoring as it focussed on extending the role of mentoring to embrace social justice. As Hobson et al. (2016) had already worked to consider mentoring across varying professions to report on what mentoring practices, in the field of education, could learn from them I used their findings as an efficient way of considering mentoring practices across different fields. Cochran et al.'s (2017) model was selected for consideration as it was current and situated in a clinical health context which was an area not included within Hobson et al.'s (2016) study. While additional models from health, business and educational literature could be cited, the models considered serve as a representative sample from which some commonalities and aspects of difference can be extrapolated to allow for the development of an informed perspective.

2.6 A Summary of the Models of Mentoring Considered

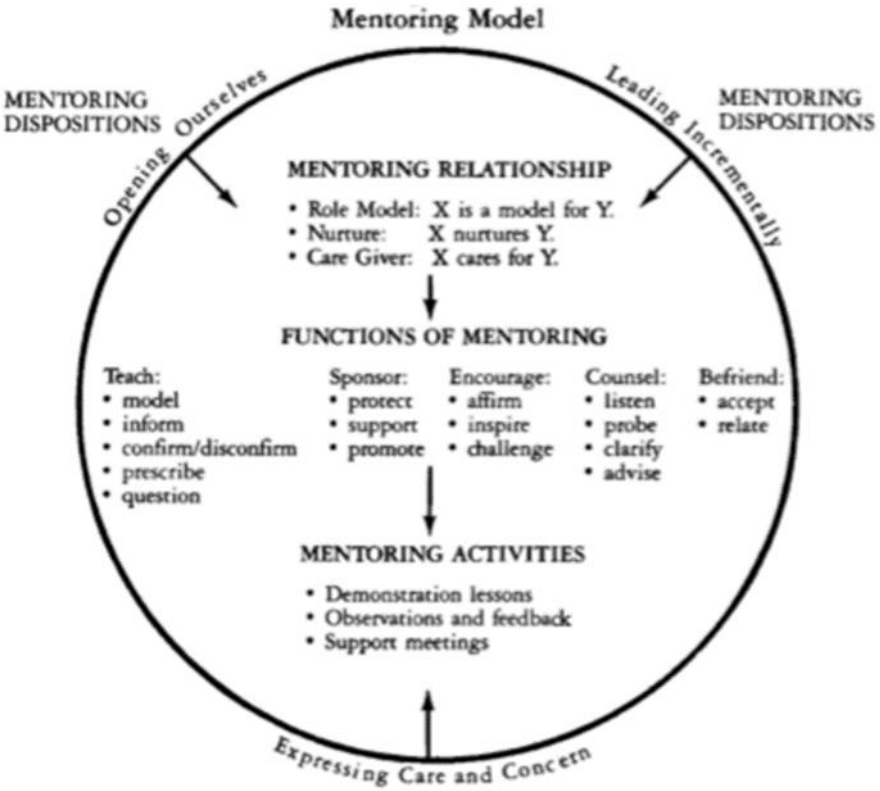
Figure 2: A summary of the models of mentoring considered

Model	Field	Mentees
Anderson and Shannon's (1988) Mentoring Model	Education	Beginning teachers
Maynard and Furlong's (1995) description of three distinct models of mentoring • The apprenticeship model • The competency model • The reflective practitioner model	Education	Student teachers
Hudson's (2004) Five-factor Model for Mentoring	Education	Student teachers
Hallam et al.'s (2012) Two Contrasting Models for Mentoring	Education	Beginning teachers
Ambrosetti's (original 2014, revised 2017) Holistic Mentoring Model	Education	Student teachers
Hobson et al.'s (2016) case studies of successful employee mentoring schemes	Football – Referees Business Start-ups Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development Police Leadership Health Research Education – Leadership focus (US) Police Leadership (Norway) Arçelik (a household appliances manufacturer) – Leadership (Turkey) HR – management (Romania) – professional development Bank (Hungary) – talented employees and leadership	Employees, employed by these various organisations where their employee mentoring schemes were identified as successful, with the aim of investigating the implications for teacher mentoring
Lofthouse's (2015) model, cited in Lofthouse (2018), A practice development-led model for individual professional learning and institutional growth through mentoring	Education	Student Teachers
Hobson's (2016) ONSIDE Mentoring	Education	Beginning Teachers
Cochran et al.'s (2017) Effective Mentoring	Health	Surgeons
Cavanagh & King's (2019) Peer Group Mentoring Model	Education	Beginning teachers

2.6.1 Anderson and Shannon's (1988) Mentoring Model

Anderson and Shannon (1988) believed that most of the models of mentoring which existed at the point of their work, whilst indicating a need for a mentor to promote the professional and/or personal development of a mentee via a described set of functions, did not recognise sufficiently that mentoring is fundamentally a nurturing process. Anderson and Shannon (1988) asserted that the mentor needed to be a role model to the mentee, and that the mentor must demonstrate certain dispositions to help frame the process. They agreed with Levinson et al.'s (1978) stance that the essence of mentoring may be found to a greater degree within the nature of the relationship that exists between the mentor and mentee, rather than in the various roles and functions suggested by the term of mentoring. They believed that a caring relationship was at least as equally improtant to the functional aspects of the process. They went so far as to say that 'the kind of relationship we advocate in mentoring is similar to that of a good substitute parent to an adult child' (Anderson and Shannon, 1988, p40). Although Anderson and Shannon (1988) were advocating the need for a mentor to exhibit the ability to care for their mentee over thrty years before this study it was apparent that this was not an attribute deemed important in current practice, given that there was no explicit mention of 'care' within the National Standards for school-based initial teacher training mentors (TSC, 2016). There were a number of references to the need for 'support' throughout this set of standards (TSC, 2016) but with no explicit definition of the term then consequently it was left open to interpretation. The closest the standards came to being explicit about the need for emotional support was in saying that mentors should empathise with the challenges a trainee faces (DfE, 2016, p10) but the opportunity was lost to make clear that student teachers may find the experience emotionally challenging.

Figure 3: Anderson and Shannon's (1988) Mentoring Model



Anderson and Shannon (1988) described five functions of mentoring, to be built upon on a fundamental caring relationship: teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counselling, and befriending. By ‘teaching’ they meant the basic behaviours associated with teaching, including: modelling, informing, confirming/disconfirming, prescribing, and questioning. The term ‘sponsoring’ encompassed three essential behaviours: protecting, supporting, and promoting. Anderson and Shannon (1988) felt that a beginning teacher’s mentor was well placed to protect them, not only from something within their environment but from themselves. A mentor could support their mentee with tasks assigned to them and as sponsors, could promote them in school, within the particular instructional and social systems. ‘Encouraging’ was stated as a process that included the behaviours of affirming, inspiring, and challenging. ‘Counselling’ was defined as a problem-solving process that would include behaviours such as listening, probing, clarifying, and advising. Lastly, Anderson and Shannon (1988) believed that mentoring demands ‘befriending’. The two critical associated behaviours of ‘befriending’ were deemed to be accepting and relating; as

a friend, a mentor would convey to their mentee that they understand and support them and that they have time for them.

Anderson and Shannon (1988) then suggested three dispositions which they felt to be essential to the concept of mentoring. Firstly, mentors should be willing to opening themselves to their mentees by, for example, allowing their mentees the opportunity to observe them in action and to communicate to their mentees the rationale underpinning their decisions and actions. Secondly, mentors should have the ability to lead their mentees incrementally over time. Thirdly, mentors should have the disposition to express care and concern about the personal and professional welfare of their mentees, this relates directly back to the underpinning nurturing and caring relationship and indicates that it is not enough to *be* caring but a mentor needs to be able to communicate this to their mentee.

The diagram in Figure 3 summarises the essence of mentoring and its basic components, according to Anderson and Shannon (1988). Their model reflects that a relationship in which the mentee views the mentor as a role model and the mentor nurtures and cares for the mentee is fundamental to mentoring. Within the mentoring relationship are five mentoring functions and related behaviours which are carried out within various mentoring activities. The entire mentoring process is framed by a set of three dispositions, displayed by the mentor. The stated mentoring activities were largely the same thirty years after (TSC, 2016) the publication of Anderson and Shannon's model but the focus on the nature of the relationship had diminished. This may in part have been due to mentoring being 'buffeted by a system driven by targets, standards and assessment regimes' (Lofthouse and Thomas, 2014, p216) which was not so prevalent pre-1988, before the advent of the first iteration of the National Curriculum.

Anderson and Shannon (1988, p39) recognised that 'traditional mentors are usually older authority figures who, over a long period of time, protect, advocate for, and nurture their protégés' and conseqently this model was based on that understanding of a mentor. There were two aspects of this recognition which were potentially different, more than three

decades on from this assertion. In terms of a mentor being 'usually older' than the mentee we know that this was not always the case, in 2019, 49.7% of post graduate student teachers, who accounted for 85.5% of those training to teach, were older than 25, according to the Initial Teacher Training Census (DfE, 2019a). It would be quite common, therefore, in current practice for a mentee to be mentored by a younger mentor, given that a teacher could be a mentor by the age of 22. It was also not clear what Anderson and Shannon constituted as 'a long period of time' but we know that mentoring within the student teacher context is bound by timelines (Ambrosetti, 2014). Consequently, the characteristics of a traditional mentor, and the context of the process, may well differ to those of thirty years ago, as described by Anderson and Shannon. This would potentially impact upon some particular aspects of Anderson and Shannon's Mentoring Model e.g. the Mentoring Relationship. The notion of being an elder is inextricably linked with being a role model, nurturer and care giver and although it is certainly possible to carry those roles being the younger person in the relationship it would add a level of complexity, given that the situation works against 'the natural order' of the understanding of 'mentor' (Ehrich et al., 2004). Ordinarily, an open and trusting relationship between people takes time to develop. Given that a placement is bound by a timeframe that may, at the most, be 10 weeks then there is clearly a need to develop this strong relationship more quickly than might happen naturally; creating a potential for the development of the relationship to be forced to a degree.

2.6.2 Maynard and Furlong's (1995) description of three distinct models of mentoring

Maynard and Furlong (1995, pp18-21) described the three distinct models of mentoring in existence two decades ago, each of which were thought by them to be partial and inadequate:

The apprenticeship model:

This was advocated by O'Hear (1988) and The Hillgate group (1989, p9), who believed that teaching's complex, difficult skills of high moral and cultural value were best learned 'by the

emulation of experienced practitioners and by supervised practice under guidance', they argued that all you need to do is work alongside an experienced practitioner. The work of a mentor does contain elements of an apprenticeship model. Students do need first-hand experience, for instance, of pupils, teaching scenarios and strategies 'but in order to be able to 'see', they need an interpreter. They need to work alongside a mentor who can explain the significance of what is happening in the classroom' (Maynard and Furlong, 1995, p18) as 'the accumulation of experience alone is insufficient for teachers in any stage of development' (Lofthouse, 2018, p258). The notion of 'working alongside' and the use of 'emulating' is interesting, 'working alongside' suggests a more equal power balance than 'emulating' someone's practice. If it is suggested that we need to emulate practice then there is an assumption that the mentor's practice is correct, to be aspired to and therefore 'copied' which might work well in exactly the same conditions but teaching involves constantly changing variables such as individual children, time of day, cultural difference and so forth, consequently that exact procedure or strategy may not work successfully in a slightly different context. It must stand to reason that a student teacher needs to be able to be critical of practice observed so that they are to use it to inform their own pedagogy and adapt it, amending it to work effectively with the particular set of variables within each lesson they teach. 'Working alongside' suggests that there would be opportunities for collaborative teaching and therefore for knowledge to be co-constructed by the mentor and the mentee, aligning with a constructivist's approach (Bruner, 1966), working beyond an apprenticeship approach which could be more aligned to a behaviourist's stance (Skinner, 1993).

The competency model:

This was based on systematic training, in effect coaching the student on a list of agreed behaviours (e.g. within in an observation schedule) where the student teacher would be involved in discussions around which of the competencies they would want to focus on. Making it explicit that the student teacher is to be involved in the decisions about which of the competencies to focus on would be important in them feeling that they had a voice in the

relationship and some ownership of their own learning and development which is different to the more passive role which could potentially be adopted in an apprenticeship model. If a student teacher is able to be part of the discussions about the areas they need to focus on then the implication is that the mentor recognises that the student teacher has a developing understanding of the role of the teacher and is therefore not treated as a complete novice, engendering some feelings of empowerment and a move away from being a passive recipient of knowledge, that being handed down to them by the mentor.

The reflective practitioner model:

This model suggests that once a student teacher has achieved basic classroom competence that ways need to be found to introduce a critical element to the mentoring process. If learning to teach is at the heart of ITE then reflection on teaching, however that would be defined, must be part of the learning process. A programme's structure would support this if there were concurrent periods of school and university activity so that the university tutors could encourage students to reflect upon their school experience. This requires the mentors to exhibit the disposition of being open, as described by Anderson and Shannon (1988, see Figure 3, p58), so that they would be willing to examine their own mentoring and teaching practices with a critical lens and be able to discuss that freely with their mentee. In the scenarios where a mentee and mentor would be discussing the mentor's practice there are clearly opportunities for uncomfortable dialogue, in order to handle these scenarios positively then particular skills and attributes would need to be demonstrated by both participants e.g. a mentee would need to be able to question a mentor's practice without appearing judgemental and a mentor would need to be confident in articulating their practice, being able to justify a rationale without feeling that they were being criticised by their mentee and consequently adopting a 'defensive' stance about their practice.

Maynard and Furlong (1995) reflected that it was important, at this stage of a student's development, that they made the shift from focussing on their own progress to focussing on the children's learning. It is common for mentors to withdraw when a student teacher has

achieved a basic competence (Maynard and Furlong, 1995) but they need to continue to take an active role to support the student in making that shift of focus to the children's learning, this cannot happen until the student teacher has gained some confidence in their own teaching. To facilitate the process of shifting the mentor's role then mentors need to be able to move from being a model and instructor to being a co-enquirer, other aspects of the role may continue but in promoting critical reflection a more equal and open relationship is essential.

Maynard and Furlong (1995) proposed that mentors and mentees moved through these three stages during the mentoring process, rather than adopted one of the approaches. Although Maynard and Furlong (1995) advocated an approach which was capable of shifting it was still limited to three stages and there was no indication that there would be movement back and forth between these linear stages with the suggestion that this model was a three step process. The ability to be fluid and the recognition of mentoring as a dynamic process is central to Lofthouse's (2018) cyclical model which reflects the complex nature of mentoring, not only within one mentoring relationship but between a student's placements and between student teachers from the mentor's perspective. Kram (cited in Hallam, 2012, p247) stated 'There is considerable agreement among those who have studied mentoring that in order to understand fully the nature and impact of this developmental relationship, it is necessary to examine how it changes over time' adding strength to the position that the mentoring process should not be a static one.

2.6.3 Hudson's (2004) Five-factor Model for Mentoring

Figure 4: Hudson's (2004) Five-factor Model for Mentoring

Hudson's (2004) model identifies five factors for effective mentoring:

- system requirements that focus on curriculum directives
- competent pedagogical knowledge for articulating best practices
- modelling of efficient and effective practice
- feedback for the purposes of reflection to improve practices.
- couched within the encompassing factor of the personal attributes that the mentor needs to exhibit for constructive dialogue

Hudson added that specific mentoring strategies, associated with each factor, needed to be designed to adequately guide mentoring in specific subject areas and the model was aligned with a constructivist approach (Hudson, 2004) as was the reflective practitioner model proposed by Maynard and Furlong (1995). This five factor model not only identified the functions of a mentor in terms of what they need to 'do' but also stressed the importance of how a mentor should 'be' (Stephen, 2010) by identifying that they needed to have the attributes required to engage positively in constructive dialogue. Hudson (2004, p142) made explicit an expectation for mentors to be 'encouraging, affable, attentive and supportive', believing that these attributes were necessary for constructive dialogue. Although Hudson (2004) recognised the need for mentors to have particular personal attributes, these were limited to being attributes needed to engage in constructive dialogue, they did not stretch to those 'nurturing' and 'care giving' attributes which Anderson and Shannon (1988) believed were fundamental to a positive mentoring relationship. The elliptical arrangement of the model would indicate that Hudson (2004) did not envisage the mentoring process as linear.

Given that the branch leading to personal attributes was longer than the others then they must have been designed to be in place at all times, whatever the particular focus was of the mentoring process at any point.

2.6.4 Hallam et al.'s (2012) Two Contrasting Models for Mentoring

Hallam et al. (2012) examined and compared two different mentoring models used in the Asher and Dane School Districts (pseudonyms), in the USA, to support their beginning teachers and subsequently increase teacher retention.

Figure 5: Dane District's Model (Hallam et al., 2012)

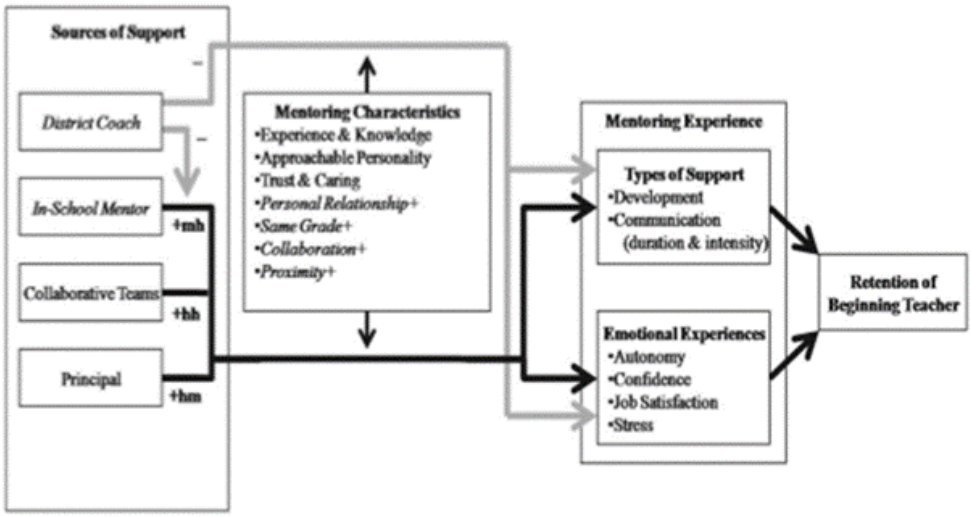
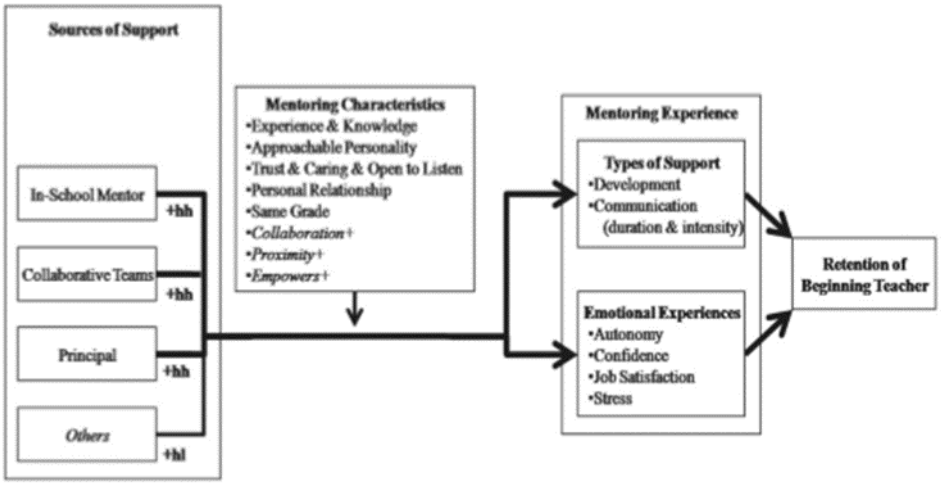
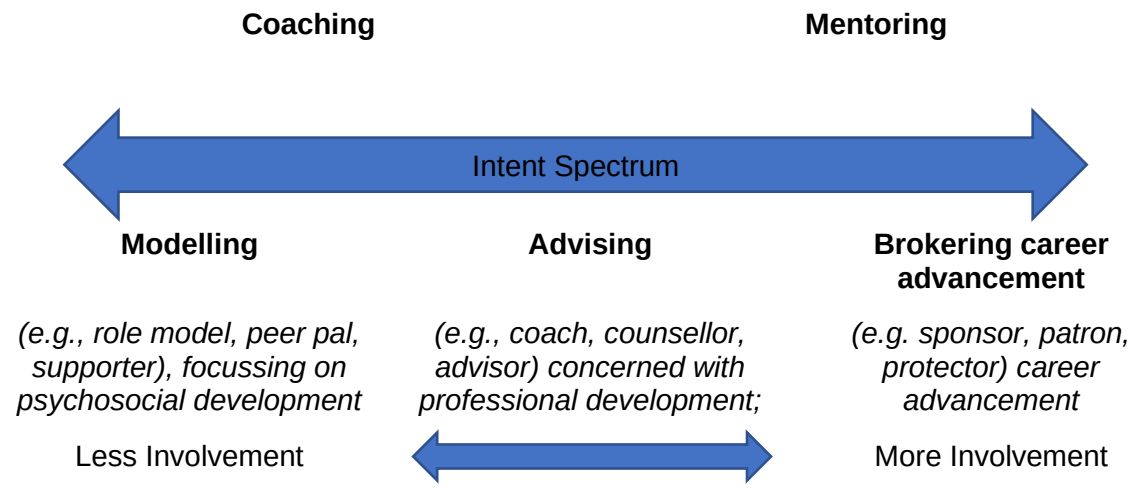


Figure 6: Asher District's Model (Hallam et al., 2012)



As the teachers were in post, rather than being student teachers on a placement, the time limiting factor was not an issue to consider within the model and as such is something to be aware of but the main components, and findings, would still have relevance to a mentoring model in an ITE context.

The major difference between the two mentoring models was that Dane's mentoring model initially had off-site district coaches assigned for the beginning teachers' first year. Hallam et al. (2012) based their understanding of the distinction between a coach and a mentor on the work of Mertz (2004, cited in Hallam et al.,2012, p262), who considered levels of 'intent and involvement' in distinguishing mentoring from other supportive relationships. Mertz (2004) suggested that intent referred to three types of relationships: modelling, advising and brokering career advancement, which she suggested sat on a spectrum, while involvement referred to the degree of interaction and amount of time required to build and maintain a successful relationship. She concluded that coaching was closer to the modelling end of the intent spectrum, whereas mentoring was closer to the brokering end of the intent spectrum and required more time and involvement to build meaningful relationships (Mertz, 2004, cited in Hallam et al.,2012, p262), as such I believe that this can be represented visually in the following way:



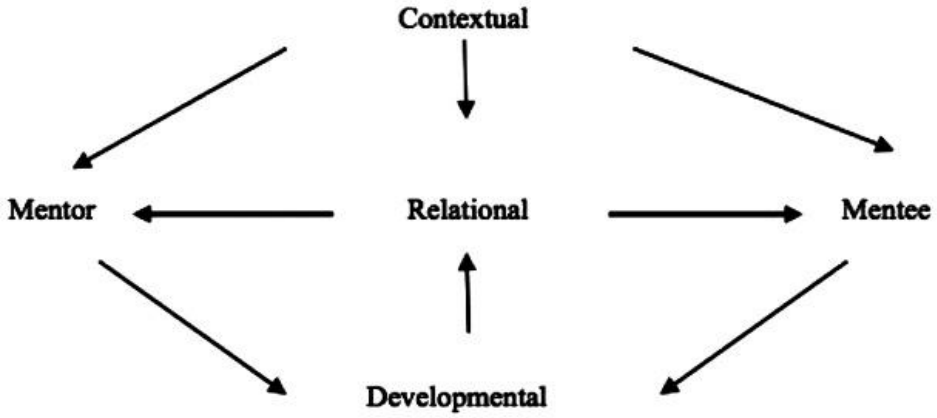
In both models, the findings indicated that support from principals, in-school mentors, and collaborative professional learning community (PLC) teams were clearly important. Higgins and Kram (2001) refer to this as relationship constellations, in which mentoring comes from a variety of individuals. However, the most striking difference between the structures and results of the mentoring models was found in the role of the district coaches. In the Dane District's model (see Figure 5), district coaches, typically did not belong to the school of their mentees, resulting in a lack of coordination with these individuals' principals, in-school mentors and collaborative PLC teams. The presence of district coaches, who were considered to be 'experts' or 'master' teachers, may have caused the in-school mentors, collaborative PLC teams, and even the principals to abdicate their mentoring responsibilities. In the Dane District's mentoring model, district coaches lacked proximity and personal relationship with beginning teachers, resulting in increased stress and lack of support, which was noted by many leavers of the profession. In contrast, teachers in Asher reported strong support from their in-school mentors throughout their first 3 years, which over time helped increase their confidence and autonomy. The experience of these teachers in Asher was prevalent among teachers who stayed in their posts. In short, the Asher mentoring model using in-school mentors (see Figure 6) appeared to be a stronger model in helping provide the optimal mentoring relationship and support that may have led to greater retention of beginning teachers in that district. These models are of particular interest as, in addition to

making explicit the mentoring characteristics needed to develop open and trusting relationships, they consider who might be best placed to be an effective mentor for a beginning teacher. Previous models (Anderson and Shannon, 1988; Hudson, 2004; Maynard and Furlong, 1995) considered similar functions and attributes of an effective mentor but not who they should be and tended to think of the mentor in a mentoring relationship as one clearly defined person, rather than a number of people. The implications of Hallam et al.'s (2102) work for ITE would be that it might be beneficial for a student teacher to be mentored by a number of different people, with different sets of responsibilities, within the school in which they were placed as the suggestion would be that it could be detrimental to their progress and feelings of wellbeing to be mentored by somebody external to their school setting. However, it needs to be noted that the internal mentors within these models were not responsible for assessing their mentees. This would have alleviated an area of tension, if the internal mentors had been responsible for assessing their mentees then perhaps the external mentors would have had more of a positive impact (Hobson et al., 2016).

2.6.5 Ambrosetti's (original 2014, revised 2017) Holistic Mentoring Model

Ambrosetti et al. (2014) suggested a Holistic Mentoring Model. Although each component of the model is described separately, the components need to be considered as a holistic method, as shown in Figure 7, to ensure a mentoring experience that provides the opportunity for a successful placement (Ambrosetti, 2014).

Figure 7: Ambrosetti et al.'s (2014) Holistic Mentoring Model



The relational component of mentoring, situated centrally in the model, referred to the relationship to be developed between the mentor and mentee. Descriptors such as nurture, support, mutuality, and trust encompassed the relational component (Ambrosetti, 2014, p225) and the roles a mentor undertook in this component were those of advocate, friend, colleague, and counsellor. These relational descriptors were more in line with those suggested by Anderson and Shannon (1988), they moved beyond those personal attributes deemed as sufficient by Hudson (2004).

The developmental component of mentoring focussed on the purpose of the relationship and this related directly to the specific needs of the mentor and mentee. The mentor offered critical feedback, role model skills, and facilitated opportunities for first hand learning. Equally the mentee would engage in the opportunities provided and work alongside the mentor to developmentally grow. Thus, in this model, the mentee would be expected to engage but as it would be the mentor who provided the opportunities then the mentor must have been assumed to be in control of the relationship.

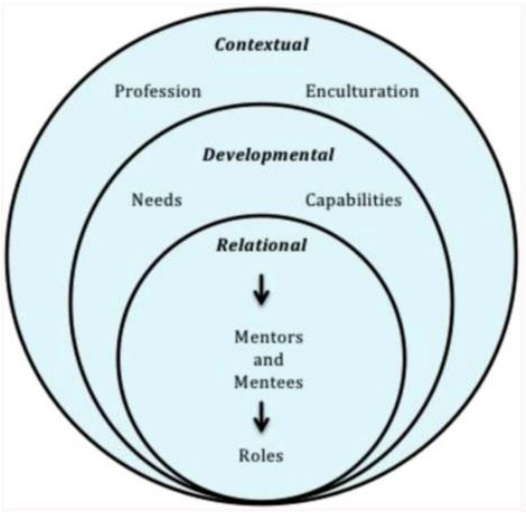
The contextual aspect of mentoring was as equally important to the process as the relational and developmental components. Mentors would role model job/workplace behaviour and provide explicit instruction about the culture of the workplace and its operation. The mentee

in return would observe the mentor and engage in discussion that confirmed or clarified the observations of the specific nuances of the job and/or workplace. Again, the mentor would be leading the way with the mentee being expected to engage through observation and subsequent discussion.

In Ambrosetti's (2014) holistic mentoring model it was clear that the mentee had an active role to play in the success of the partnership. It was the first time I encountered specific expectations of a mentee being made clear, for instance, the mentee was explicitly expected to engage in the opportunities provided. Mentees were also expected to 'work alongside' the mentor, as suggested earlier by Maynard and Furlong (1995). 'Working alongside', as discussed previously, represents a distinct power difference from that which would exist within an apprenticeship approach in that it indicates a level of equality between participants. Indeed, this model places the mentor and mentee visually alongside each other which does not signify a top down approach to mentoring but one where mentor and mentee are side by side. In this model, not only would a mentee need to be prepared to work alongside a mentor but a mentor would need to be prepared to do the same, necessitating a mentor's openness (Anderson and Shannon, 1988).

Interestingly, Ambrosetti et al. (2017) later re-configured their Holistic Mentoring Model, see Figure 8.

Figure 8: Ambrosetti et al.'s (2017) re-configuration of their Holistic Mentoring Model



As in the earlier iteration, the three components visualised mentoring as holistic, thus the components were now nested as one to underline this view, despite each component still having a separate purpose. If we work from the outside in, the mentoring relationship can be viewed as a result of the developmental and contextual aspects of the process which would align with the original configuration of 2014. However, if we work from the inner circle outwards, given there is no indication that we are not to do this, the re-configured circular figure could also indicate that mentoring radiates from the relationship. Here, the mentor and mentee's relationship is central. It is something to be kept safe, as both the developmental and contextual aspects of the process not only protect in but could be affected by it. If we take this stance then in the re-configuration the developmental and contextual aspects are secondary to the formation of a strong relationship between the mentor and mentee but potentially affected by it. Within ITE, typically, the mentor and mentee have not previously interacted and the relationship that develops is often dependent on time and the requirements of the placement. Thus, given that the relational component is central to mentoring, as the roles mentors and mentees undertake within the relationship directly impact upon the achievement of goals, it is imperative that both mentor and mentee are ready to invest in the formation of a positive professional relationship from the very outset.

Ambrosetti et al. (2017) went on to suggest an alternative mentoring model to the typical dyad model. They investigated a triad model where two student teachers were placed with one classroom teacher. The student teachers were enrolled upon a four-year undergraduate route into teaching and the triads involved a mentor teacher, a final year student teacher and a first-year student teacher. This moved towards Higgins and Kram's (2001) idea of relationship constellations by broadening the role of mentor beyond one person.

The triad seemed to offer distinct advantages for each participant. The first-year student teacher was the least experienced and understood that their role was one of learner and assistant within the triad. They developed a relationship with their mentor teacher and the

final-year student teacher, however, they were closer to the final-year student teacher as they had a shared language and understanding. Both the mentor teachers and final-year student teachers were mentors to them; however, the final year student was both a mentor and a role model. The first-year student teachers were provided with the opportunities they needed to develop and practise their skills, whilst having a mentor who they potentially felt more at ease with.

The final-year student teachers became mentors to the first-year student teachers and felt empowered by this experience. The final-year student teachers included and welcomed the first year into the relationship and willingly shared the experience with them. They developed a strong relationship with their mentor teacher and had opportunities to refine their teaching skills throughout the placement.

The mentor teachers led the relationship but they ensured that there were opportunities for the relationship to develop between the two student teachers. They established the structure of the relationship so that the final year could become a mentor to the first year. The mentor teachers indicated that the triad model enabled them to address specific developmental needs of the student teachers, given that they had support from both student teachers in the triad.

The results demonstrated that the triad fashioned a working environment that was supportive, collaborative and collegial. Both the first year and final-year student teachers in the triads reported benefits, with the first-year student teachers benefiting from explicit peer mentoring from their final year colleagues. The positive influence of peer mentoring can, in part, be explained by the sharing of similar circumstances through a common language.

When discussing the roles of the final-year student teachers and mentor teachers in the triad, the first-year student teachers reported that the mentor teachers provided feedback and advice, whereas the final-year preservice teachers tended more often to provide assistance and advice. This suggested that the first-year student teachers were being

mentored by the mentor teachers, and by the final-year student teachers. Interestingly, the total number of interactions between the first-year student teachers and final-year student teachers were higher than those between the first-year student teachers and mentor teachers, signalling a closer relationship between the two student teachers.

The implications of Ambrosetti et al.'s (2017) work, for ITE, are that reconceptualisations of mentoring using alternative models, to increase support for both mentees and mentors, would require not only a re-thinking of the structure of placements but also perceptions held about the outcomes of mentoring for both schools and HEIs and subsequently mentor and mentee preparation for such experiences.

2.6.6 Hobson et al.'s (2016) case studies of successful employee mentoring schemes

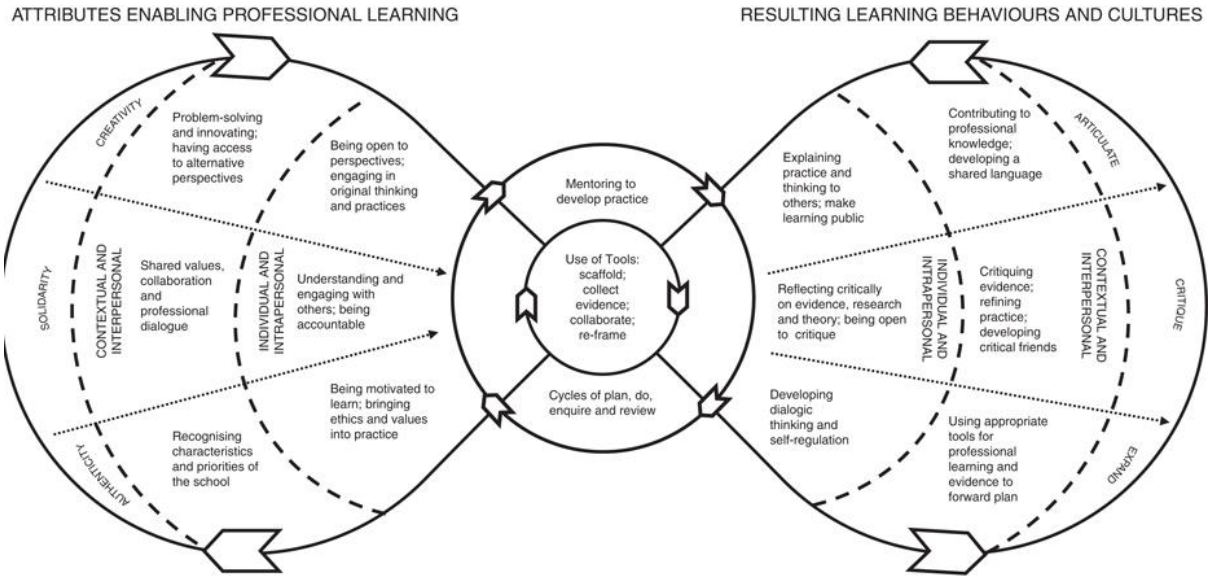
Hobson et al. (2016) sought to establish what teacher mentoring stakeholders might learn from successful and effective practice in other sectors, in the UK and internationally. They conducted ten case studies of successful employee mentoring schemes and what was common to all of them was that efforts were made to create what could be called 'pro-mentoring contexts', as opposed to 'anti-mentoring contexts' (Malderez, 2015), as there was no evidence of 'judgementoring' (Hobson and Malderez, 2013). In most cases, mentors were 'external' to the organisation or work environment in which the mentee was employed or based: i.e., they did not have regular and frequent working relations with each other, this was in direct conflict with Hallam et al.'s (2012) conclusion that mentors needed to be situated within the same organisation for maximum effectiveness. In all cases, the schemes in Hobson et al.'s (2016) study either strongly recommended or required that mentees were not mentored by their line managers, and all the mentoring relationships examined were offline. Hobson et al. (2016) argued that this issue goes to the very heart of mentoring and cited Clutterbuck (2004, p13) as defining mentoring as 'off-line help from one person to another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking.' In the previous

models considered, the notion of ‘judgementoring’ and its potential impact upon the mentoring relationship was not explored or even identified as problematic.

2.6.7 Lofthouse’s (2015), cited in Lofthouse (2018), practice development-led model for individual professional learning and institutional growth through mentoring

Lofthouse (2015, cited in Lofthouse, 2018, p249) offered a mentoring model ‘as a means for those involved in developing, supporting and practising mentoring in ITE to consider its dynamic dimensions and potential ways through which it can be enhanced.’

Figure 9: Lofthouse’s (2015, cited in Lofthouse, 2018) practice development-led model for individual professional learning and institutional growth through mentoring



Aspects of mentoring were recognised as complex and interrelated, at the epicentre of the model was the act of mentoring, undertaken to support and develop students’ practice. The model was designed as cyclical in nature. It could refer to the micro elements of one mentoring relationship in terms of the cycle of teaching, being observed, feeding back and setting targets. However, one could also withdraw from those micro elements and use the framework across placements or look through the lens of the mentor, developing their own practice across students. In addition to mentors and teacher educators working with this model, students themselves were seen to require the same attributes to enable professional

learning. As stated in this study's introduction there is a need for mentors and their mentees to think about how 'to be' and what 'to do' (Stephen, 2010) which relates clearly to the left and right side of Lofthouse's (2018) model. These are equally weighted visually indicating that Lofthouse (2018) believed that both of those aspects were equally important.

The notion of a 'fellow teacher educator', as one of the roles taken by mentor teachers outlined by Grimmett, Forgasz, Williams and White (2018, p345), emphasises professional experience partnerships where university-based teacher educators would regard mentor teachers as colleagues. This would be aligned with Lofthouse's (2018) advice where the teacher educator not only regards the school-based mentor as a colleague but where the school-based mentor regards the teacher educator as a colleague and also takes on the empowering role of teacher-educator themselves. The 'supporter of student teacher learning' (Grimmett et al., 2018, p347) would occur where a community of practice model formed the basis of the professional experience programme, this would then enable mentoring practices to have a further reaching effect than just helping students to develop their classroom practice (Grimmett et al., 2018). My professional experiences of mentoring within ITE, however, were largely situated within a traditional apprenticeship model, at best they were transitional in nature (Kochan & Pascarelli, 2012). The 'supervisor and assessor' (Grimmett et al. 2018, p345) role corresponds to the traditional apprenticeship model of professional experience and was restricted to helping student teachers to develop their classroom practice. This traditional model continued to be implicitly supported by the DfE (2016), despite the development of alternative research-informed models, across three decades, which sought to maximise the potential of the mentoring process in transforming practice. Lofthouse's (2018) model is firmly at the transformative end (Kochan and Pascarelli, 2012) of the mentoring paradigm spectrum where beliefs and routines could be questioned to allow for a consideration of how things might be rather than an assertion of how they are.

2.6.8 Hobson's (2016) ONSIDE Mentoring for beginning teachers

Hobson's (2016) ONSIDE Mentoring was another research-informed framework for mentoring, published around the same time as the government's standards for mentors (TSC, 2016), which was 'offered as a means of forestalling or combatting judgementoring and of enhancing mentoring practice and its positive impact on beginning teachers' (Hobson, 2016, pp87-88).

Figure 10: Hobson's (2016) ONSIDE Mentoring for beginning teachers

MENTORING IS / SHOULD BE…	MENTORING SHOULD NOT…
Off-line (i.e., separated from line-management or supervision) and non-hierarchical	Occur within hierarchical and power relationships – e.g. where mentors formally assess the work of mentees. This makes it difficult to establish relational trust and for mentees to openly share their professional learning and development needs with mentors.
Non-evaluative and non-judgemental	Be evaluative or judgemental, which can also impede the establishment or maintenance of a trusting relationship between mentor and mentee, and (partly in consequence) impede mentees' professional learning, development and well-being.
Supportive of mentees' psychosocial needs and well-being	Focus solely on mentees' 'performance' or the development of their capability with no consideration for mentees' emotional or psychological state or their well-being. The latter are both important in their own right *and* impact on mentees' capacity to learn and develop.
Individualised — tailored to the specific and changing needs (emotional as well as developmental) of the mentee	Be one-size-fits-all, since any given mentoring strategy will be more or less relevant to and produce different (positive or negative) responses in/from different mentees.
Developmental and growth-oriented — seeking to promote mentees' learnacy and provide them with appropriate degrees of challenge	Be solely or selectively deployed as a remedial strategy to 'correct' perceived deficiencies in professional practice. This can discourage mentees from taking advantage of the 'support' of mentors, and encourage them to fabricate their learning and development needs.
Empowering — progressively non-directive to support mentees to become more autonomous and agentic	(Normally) be directive, in which mentors provide 'solutions' rather than supporting mentees to find their own, and which accords mentees little autonomy and agency. This encourages mentees' dependency on the mentor and does not promote learnacy.

This model is predicated on the understanding that a mentor being responsible for the assessment of their mentee is not appropriate. It recognises the emotional aspects of mentoring and the individual nature of each relationship whilst acknowledging the need for the process to be geared towards the mentee's development. Hobson's (2016) model encouraged a progressively non-directional style of mentoring to empower mentees. Because this model was fundamentally off-line and non-evaluative it was at odds with the

government's mentor standards (TSC, 2016). Although the TSC's (2016, p7) definition of a mentor:

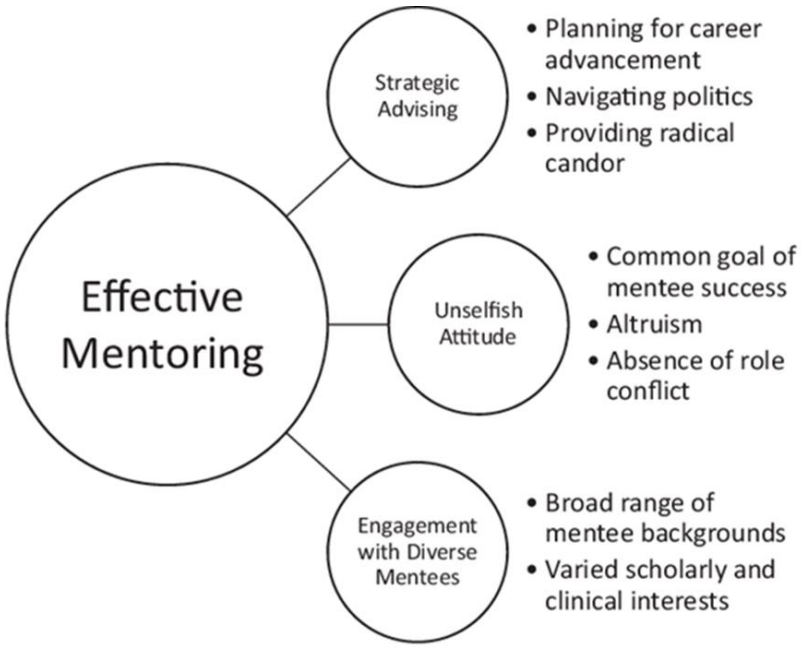
> A mentor is a suitably-experienced teacher who has formal responsibility to work collaboratively within the ITT partnership to help ensure the trainee receives the highest-quality training

did not make mention of a mentor adopting a supervisory role it was stated that mentors needed to be trained to 'assess trainee teachers effectively' (TSC, 2016, p7), 'monitor performance' (p8) and 'moderate judgements' (p12). Therefore, the implict message of the standards was that mentors would be supervisors and assessors.

2.6.9 Cochran et al.'s (2017) Effective Mentoring Model

Cochran et al. (2017) sought to describe characteristics of effective mentoring relationships in academic surgery, based upon lived experiences of mid-career and senior female US academic surgeons.

Figure 11: Cochran et al.'s (2017) Effective Mentoring Model



The participants in their study described the need for multiple mentors over time with each mentor addressing a unique domain. This not only relates to the idea of relationship constellations (Higgins and Kram, 2001) but also to the ideas of Maynard and Furlong (1995) and Lofthouse (2018) whereby mentoring relationships and processes do not remain static but evolve over the course of the mentoring period. This study suggests that these mentees were seeking mentors, rather than coaches, given that they are looking for people at the mentoring end of the intent spectrum (Mertz, 2004) and aligned to Hallam et al.'s (2012) findings in this way. Participants also suggested that mentees should seek mentors who would serve as strategic advisors, be unselfish, and engage with diverse mentees. Given that the word 'seek' was used by the participants in Cochran et al.'s (2017) study the implication was that the mentees would have at least some degree of choice in who their mentor might be, this was not the case within the researcher's ITE context. Once it was agreed by the HEI and a host school that this school would be hosting student teachers for a placement the school would then indicate how many student teachers they would be a position to take. The decisions about who would be mentor to which mentee within each placement would be taken by a host school's ITT Co-ordinator and members of the senior management team within that school. A constricting factor would likely to be which year group the student/s would need to be placed in to meet the requirements of their programme. Beyond this the provider who have no influence about which mentor would be paired with which student and the mentee would have no input about who they were placed with. Even if the mentors themselves were part of the decision making about whether or not they would like to mentor a student teacher they would not expect to choose which mentee they would take from those coming into the school. Conseqently, the specific pairings of mentors and mentees within ITE contexts would not ordinarily either involve the mentee or the mentor. Thus, the pairings were random in nature and the school would only be able to predict the success of a mentoring relationship based on the characteristics of the member of their staff who would be the mentor as the incoming student teacher to be mentored would be an 'unknown quantity' in terms of their character or personality. Cochran et al.'s (2017)

model suggested that mentees valued the relational aspects of the mentor/mentee relationship, rather than any developmental aspects. This could have been due to the fact that the mentees in this study were all at least 'mid-career' and so the mentor's role was not to support them in learning the 'practice skills' needed within their field but in perhaps how to navigate the advancement of their careers to more senior positions. Given this context, it might also be reasonable to assume that these mentees did not feel like novices within their field and so did not require a mentor's support to develop their practice. Given the importance of the relational components within successful mentoring relationships, as discussed thus far, it would seem to be a lost opportunity not to attempt to take account of a mentee's character or personality when considering the pairings. However, the practicalities of this would need to be considered carefully in a context where there is not a wealth of mentors (Lofthouse, 2018) and tight time constraints on ITE programmes.

2.6.10 Cavanagh & King's (2019) Peer Group Mentoring Model

Cavanagh and King (2019) reported on an initiative where student primary teachers participated in a mentoring programme based on the Finnish model of peer-group mentoring, during one school term as part of a professional experience partnership. Building on the work of Wang and Odell (2007), who identified 16 types of mentoring relationships, Cavanagh and King (2019) hypothesised three core conceptions of mentoring: humanistic, situated apprenticeship, and critical constructivist. The humanistic perspective focussed on helping the newcomer transition to the profession by overcoming challenges on a personal level. The situated apprenticeship approach supported novices in adjusting to the prevailing school culture and the norms of teaching through the development of specific techniques and skills aligned to their school contexts. Cavanagh and King (2019), in alignment with the stances of Hudson (2004) and Lofthouse (2018), believed that mentoring, within a critical constructivist perspective, is designed to transform teaching by engaging novice teachers and mentors in collaborative inquiry with equal participation. Although this model has some similarities to the earlier work of Maynard and Furlong (1995) where they considered a

model which moved from the apprenticeship model to the competency model and finally to the reflective practitioner model, Cavanagh and King (2019) did not present the aspects in the same ‘sequential’ manner as those proposed by Maynard and Furlong. The implication, therefore, would be that these core conceptions run concurrently, with a mentor and mentee using a variety of these aspects within the entirety of the mentoring process, depending on need.

Peer-Group Mentoring (PGM) is a Finnish mentoring model that is consistent with the approach outlined above. PGM is implemented in mixed groups of novice and more experienced teachers who engage in professional dialogue and knowledge sharing (Korhonen, Heikkinen, Kiviniemi, & Tynjälä, 2017, cited in Cavanagh and King, 2019). PGM meetings are held on a regular basis, typically in a location away from the school setting and membership is entirely voluntary. Members take ownership of the programme by suggesting topics for discussion and by contributing to the organisation and operation of the group. Group discussions are framed around the members’ narrative accounts about teaching and are facilitated by an experienced teacher-mentor who has been trained for the role and does not undertake any assessment of the participants, but rather is focussed on supporting the professional learning of members. This is again a model which uses the idea of relationship constellations (Higgins and Kram, 2001), where mentoring comes from a variety of individuals. It makes sense that different individuals would be better placed to offer different types of advice, depending on their personal roles and levels of expertise on particular areas, one member of staff cannot realistically be expected to be an expert in all aspects of the role of the teacher. Given that the membership of the group is optional then it would stand to reason that each member of the group would be open to mentoring by others, open to being a mentor and open to discussing their practice. This illustrates one of Anderson and Shannon’s (1988) mentoring dispositions and the personal attributes needed for Hudson’s (2004) model to be effective. As the relational components of the mentoring process are noted as being at least important (Hobson, 2016; Hudson, 2004) and deemed fundamental

by others (Ambrosetti et al., 2014; Ambrosetti et al., 2017; Anderson and Shannon, 1988; Cochran et al., 2017; Hallam et al, 2012; Lofthouse, 2018; Maynard and Furlong, 1995) then Cavanagh and King's (2019) model where participation is optional would ensure that a 'pro-mentoring context' (Malderez, 2015) would be established from the outset. However, within the context of ITE, there would be some concerns about the mentoring process being optional, at the outset of a placement perhaps a student teacher would not appreciate how central the mentoring process would be to their transition to being a teacher and consequently they may not opt to be part of a PGM group, perhaps believing this to potentially take up too much of their time when they are already experiencing a demanding workload. The issue of 'assessment' is also to be considered, in Cavanagh and King's (2019) model the participants are beginning teachers, rather than student teachers, so there may not be the same need for any form of assessment within the mentoring process. It could be that the mentoring relationship does not include any assessment which would satisfy Clutterbuck (2004), Hobson and Malderez (2013), Hobson (2016) and Hobson et al. (2016) but if that was the case then we would have to look beyond the mentoring relationship for an assessor.

In conclusion, on consideration of this range of mentoring models, some aspects are fundamental to successful mentoring relationships but the process of mentoring within ITE works within constraints which are peculiar to its context. The relational aspects of a mentoring process are pivotal to its effectiveness, at the very least in terms of a mentor being able to engage in constructive dialogue (Hudson, 2004) and being open to discussing their own practice to the other end of the relational spectrum where a 'parental' type relationship, cited by Anderson and Shannon (1988), was believed to be needed. Although Ambrosetti (2014, p225) stated that the mentor/mentee relationship 'can either be of a personal or professional nature', its primary purpose, as described by West (2016), 'is the professional development and/or overall growth of the novice toward a desired level of competency' so the student teacher's professional development is the process' ultimate aim.

If this is the case, then developing a parental type relationship between a mentee and their mentor may not be the most effective, or appropriate. Mentoring within the ITE context is constrained by tight time frames, typically, assessed placements are no longer than 10 weeks from beginning to end and so the positive relationship does not have the same amount of time to develop as it would if a mentee was an employee being mentored thus it is something to be fostered positively, rather than something to be allowed to develop naturally, 'in its own time'. An understanding of how fundamental a positive mentoring relationship is, regarding its impact upon effectiveness, must be made explicit to all participants. This would then encourage all parties to invest in its quick development. However, what constitutes a positive mentoring relationship must be explored so that there is a clear shared understanding of it and consequently of the roles of each participant in building that relationship. Given that the relationship is powerful and complex (Ambrosetti, 2014) it is necessary for the mentor selection process to be rigorous (TSC, 2016) but it would also seem sensible for the personalities and characteristics of those to be mentored to also be considered within this pairing, or matching, process. It would be advantageous to consider the possibility of a mentee having multiple mentors who were able to provide different types of support and who might have differing roles within the process. Having examined a range of models for mentoring, from traditional apprenticeship approaches (Maynard and Furlong, 1995) to those emerging from critical constructivist epistemologies, which would be capable of allowing the mentoring process to drive more than the development of the mentee in a school (Cavanagh and King, 2019; Lofthouse, 2018), it is clear that a cultural shift is needed within mentoring in ITE. Despite the significant shift in mentoring discourse in the last two decades, mentoring within ITE is still largely the same as it was in 1995 as those 'partial and inadequate models' described by Maynard and Furlong (1995) are still commonplace. In employing other strategies, beyond those belonging to an apprenticeship approach, then mentees must have an active role to play but for them to be able to play that active role, mentors needs to see their own role beyond that of expert in the field to be emulated. A mentor must see their mentee as more than their apprentice. In

moving towards being co-constructors of knowledge, mentors and mentees would be able to find ways of moving towards a more equal relationship. The prevailing issue of a student teacher needing to be assessed whilst on placement, to demonstrate their performance against The Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011), continues to raise several complex issues. In alignment with Clutterbuck's (2004) and Hobson's (2016) stance, mentoring should be conducted by those who are not responsible for assessing a mentee. However, the usual structures implemented within the current context, where that regularly happens (Hobson and Malderez, 2013; Lofthouse, 2018; West, 2016), would benefit from exploration to examine how assessment can exist without any detrimental effect to the mentoring process. The particular constraints, associated with mentoring student teachers within ITE, of time and the need for a student teacher to be assessed by their mentor in the practice of teaching, whilst on placement, work against the development of those fundamental relational aspects which are central to a successful mentoring process and thus we are continually creating 'anti-mentoring' contexts (Malderez, 2015) for our student teachers. The constraint of a placement being time bound is immovable given professional body requirements and programme structures so it is necessary for providers to consider this explicitly. However, the constraint of a mentor being responsible for formally assessing a mentee is movable. The specific constraints on mentoring processes within ITE need to be explored by providers and their partnerships to identify those which are immovable and those which we only perceive to be immovable because that is how they have always been done. Once the constraints are identified then approaches can be developed which take account of not only what we know about the importance of the relational aspects within the process but which also acknowledge the potential of what mentoring can bring to a mentor and their context. If the potential impact of what a more progressive style of mentoring can bring (Lofthouse, 2018; West 2016) was recognised by mentors and their schools then it would work some way to address some of the wider issues which providers face, for instance, of recruiting host schools (Lofthouse, 2018). If the value of mentoring was more widely understood and more schools offered to host placements then mentor selection would be more feasible.

Rigorous mentor selection has been recognised (DfE, 2016, Hobson et al., 2016) as a factor which is responsible for the variance in quality of mentoring experienced by mentees. Once the fundamental nature of the relationship aspects was understood by all participants, and those arranging placements around them, then from the outset participants would be more inclined to work pro-actively towards the construction of that positive mentoring relationship and work against any aspects which undermined it.

Providers and their partnerships need to re-revisit their mentoring structures, dismantle and re-construct them, building on the ideal (Lofthouse, 2018, p255) foundations. We know that the mentoring structure needs to be fit for purpose for the individuals (Korthagen, 2017) in a working environment so a pragmatic stance is needed. That pragmatic stance, however, needs to start with the ideal rather than dismissing it because that scenario is not immediately seen as workable. Current mentoring practice is largely built on an apprenticeship model which is no longer fit for purpose but, despite research indicating that a different approach is necessary, it is still relied on and supported by government language (DfE, 2016; DfE 2019c) where 'trainees' 'receive' mentoring. To do the best by our students, colleagues, schools and ultimately our pupils, we must work to ensure consistently pro-mentoring contexts, find ways of fostering, developing and protecting the relational aspects of the mentoring relationship whilst working within the constraints that we have to work with.

2.7 Implications for the Future

Several studies have suggested that mentors are more likely to be able to employ effective mentoring strategies where they have undertaken an appropriate programme of mentor preparation (Crasborn, Hennisson, Brouwer, Korthagen & Bergen, 2008). Bullough (2005) concluded from his study of being and becoming a mentor that

> mentor preparation needs to go beyond 'training', traditionally conceived as behavioural inculcation without insight (Tomlinson, 1995), and should include planned strategies to assist individuals in developing their identities as mentors.
>
> (cited in Hobson et al., 2009, p212)

However, the standards for mentors (TSC, 2016) repeatedly use the word 'training' within their guidance e.g.

> We agree with Carter's findings that the best programmes give careful thought as to how **to train** and value mentors effectively – both when teachers become mentors and on an on-going basis. This goes beyond the course structure, assignments and paperwork: **effective training** supports mentors to further improve their practice **by training them** in how to deconstruct and articulate their practice, how to coach and how to support and assess trainee teachers effectively.
>
> (TSC, 2016, p7)

As does the Early Career Framework with their commitment to rolling out 'fully funded mentor training' to support early career teachers (DfE, 2019b). Whilst the acknowledgement for the need for quality mentoring is evidenced by this, it also suggests that the DfE believes in 'behavioural inculcation without insight' (Tomlinson, 1995, cited in Hobson et al., 2009, p212) as an effective way forward for mentor development. This overlooks the inherent complexities of the process discussed earlier in the chapter.

According to Hobson et al. (2009, p214)

> Research has found that mentor preparation programmes are extremely variable in nature and quality (e.g. Abell et al., 1995), often focussing more on administrative aspects of the role than on developing mentors' ability to support and facilitate mentees' professional learning; often they are not compulsory, and are poorly attended (Feiman, Nemser and Parker, 1992; Hobson et al., 2006).

Consequently, there is a need to develop our understanding of the attributes and practices which may assist in understanding successful mentoring relationships and to develop models of useful mentor/mentee preparation, rather than training, which go beyond the administrative aspects of the role.

Within the preparation for placement we need to examine and support how students negotiate their understanding of what is learnt at university, what is learnt in schools and how to reflect upon these experiences in the development of their professional identity as an emerging teacher. To develop teaching practice, rather than maintain the status quo, students need to be supported in developing their own identity, rather than mimicking

another's, without a depth of understanding of why that teacher might practise in that way. Research-informed practice development clearly has a role to play in teacher education (Lofthouse, 2018). It is therefore important that we encourage students to make the link between theory and practice to develop their understanding and to help them think deeply about their developing pedagogies (Hudson, 2009). It would follow that, with their own focus on research and research-based practice, universities are clearly in a strong position to support students, mentors and schools. With ITE moving predominantly into the hands of the school (DfE, 2016) then there is potential for the role of research within mentor development to be diminished. Indeed, the standards for mentors (TSC, 2016) make no mention of the need for an understanding of the theoretical perspective and the Early Career Framework (DfE, 2019, p24) states that learning from educational research is only 'likely to support improvement'. This might infer that copying another's practice, without reference to underpinning research, might be sufficient to make the transition from student to effective teacher. However, we need to support students effectively in making links between areas of their learning and also to develop autonomy in being able to reflect upon various aspects of their personal practices and emerging identities as teachers. In Sewell's advice to student teachers he invites each to 'consider yourself to be an active partner, responsible for your own learning and shaping your own progress.' (2008, p41).

There is a need to explore, with university-based tutors, students and school-based mentors the idea that knowledge is constructed together; investigate contexts in which mentors work with one another, and with beginners, in order to accomplish joint work, not just in order to mentor or be mentored but to develop pedagogy and practice.

Chapter Three: Methodology

In adopting Danemark et al.'s (2002, p4) stance whereby metatheory should feature centrally in the planning of a social science study, to negate the risk of a project being carried out in an unsystematic and 'inconsequent manner', there was a need to establish the links between my ontological and epistemological starting points and my research. In referring to Danemark et al.'s (2002) position as a guiding principle in the planning of my study, then it seemed logical that my ontological and epistemological starting points needed to be established, and made explicit, before the connections between them and the practical research work were clarified. According to Grix, (2010, p59), ontology is the starting point of all research and is about what we may know (p63). Blaikie (2000, p8) offered a fuller description of ontological claims:

> Claims and assumptions that are made about the nature of social reality, claims about what exists, what it looks like, what units make it up and how these units interact with each other. In short, ontological assumptions are concerned with what we believe constitutes social reality.

Based on Blaikie's description, my ontological stance, in this context, recognised the social reality where students were mentored, as part of their education, whilst making the transition to teacher. My ontological stance was also fundamentally anti-foundationalist, being aligned with the understanding that

> not all social phenomena are directly observable; structures exist that cannot be observed and those that can may not present the social and political world as it actually is
> (Marsh and Smith, 2001, p530)

The mentoring process was described within institutional documentation and, from reading that, it would appear to be a straightforward process. My ontological stance recognised that the mentoring process was more complex than the guiding documentation suggested and that much of that process was 'hidden'; sometimes hidden from the participants themselves. The mentoring of students, in my study, directly involved them, their mentors, the settings in which they were placed and the institute of higher education whose programme they were

enrolled upon. The mentoring process is a central aspect of a student teacher's education, (Ambrosetti (2017); Birrell (2013); DfE (2016); Hobson et al. (2009)). A student was usually assigned only one mentor in school and consequently, the relationship could be powerful and intense (Stanulis and Russell, 2000). My claim was that much of what happened within that mentoring process was not scripted, it went beyond the published guidance and was often a process which was then improvised when these 'units' (Blaikie, 2000, p8) interacted with each other. I believed the nature of the social reality of mentoring was laden with hidden aspects which could impact upon both the mentee and the mentor, subsequently affecting the mentee's successful progress in the transition from student to teacher and the mentor's desire to continue mentoring.

According to Bateson (1977, cited in Scully, 2002, p10), 'You cannot claim to have no epistemology. Those who so claim have nothing but a bad epistemology' which further supported the necessity to articulate my epistemological stance clearly. Epistemology is 'how we come to know what we know' (Grix, 2010, p63) or how we know things and how we think we know things (Keeney, 1983, p13); my epistemological stance was interpretivist. I came to know what I knew at the outset of my project from having been a student teacher, my role as a student mentor in schools once a qualified teacher, and latterly, as a teacher educator, supporting students, and mentors, both in school and at university. As described within the introduction, I had often observed students be passive participants within the mentoring process when, for example, they might sit quietly and listen to feedback rather than willingly engage in a discussion surrounding their feedback. At times, I had witnessed unexpected emotional responses to, for example, what I would have thought to be a straightforward question about their experience. This would suggest that what appeared to be a straightforward question, to the asker, may not have been perceived as straightforward to the recipient. This relates directly to the idea that structures observed may not present the social world as it is (Marsh and Smith, 2001, p530). In addition, I had also listened to the stories of students when they had returned to university from placement. I, in turn, made

interpretations of these experiences (Giddens, cited in Hollis, 1999, p146). Subsequently, I came to realise that there must be hidden aspects of mentoring which were not encapsulated within the process' guidance, appearing instead to be related to other, less tangible and more slippery, aspects, such as a mentor's approach to giving a student feedback about their performance. These examples underlined to me the need for a broadly interpretivist stance in an effort to understand, and ultimately explain, the resultant perceptions. Grix's (2010) description of the interpretivist's concerns, and the associated inherent complexities, further supported my understanding that my research would be aligned with an interpretivist epistemology. According to Grix (2010, p83), interpretivists are concerned with subjectivity, understandings, agency and the way in which people construct their social worlds, acknowledging inherent complexities involving elements of uncertainty. This suited my study as I would be investigating my participants' subjective understandings of their own experiences and consequently their subsequent courses of action which would be dependent on their own perceptions. The social world of mentoring is as complex as the units within it and uncertainty would naturally arise from consideration of the multiple truths arising from that world. I would need to be prepared for the contradictions and inconsistencies evolving from such research in the knowledge that I was not searching for universal laws or indeed any certainty about how the process worked. As stated by Grix (2010, p83),

> To caricature things a little, interpretivists' explanations are likely to be messy rather than nice and neat. They might be open ended rather than complete.

My work clearly resonated with what Cook (1998, p99) described

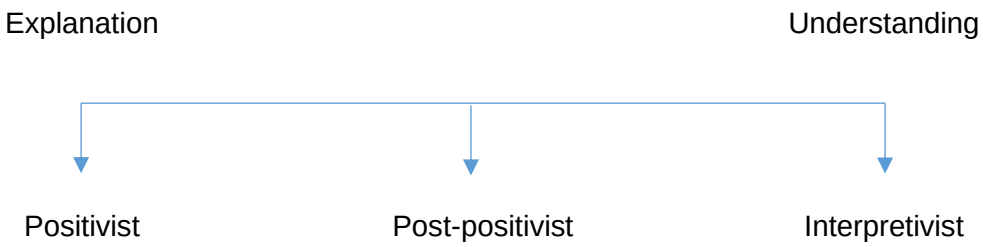
> Much of the research literature seemed to portray rather neat models that whilst allowing for some revisiting and re-evaluation, did not seem to describe the period of complete jumble that people in the group had experienced at certain times during their research. Most of us felt that this was the fundamental bit in the whole process yet to the outsider it may look like a haphazard 'lucky dip' process

3.1 Research Paradigm

According to Grix (2010, p79),

> research paradigms, that is, our understanding of *what* one can know about something and *how* one can gather knowledge about it, are inherent in every single approach to the study of society.

Whilst considering how I would be able arrive at an understanding of what makes up the hidden aspects of mentoring I examined the opposing paradigms of positivism and interpretivism (Denscombe, 2002) and a third, post-positivism (Guba and Lincoln 1998; Marsh and Furlong 2002; Robson 2002), to locate my research project. Grix (2010, p79), set out the three positions on a continuum: moving from left to right (from positivist to interpretivist positions), moving from approaches attempting to 'explain' social reality to those seeking to 'interpret' or 'understand' it:



Grix (2010, p79) suggested that

> these categories are broad and often overlap; for example, interpretivism is post-positivist, but it is a distinct paradigm linked to understanding in research. Also, the clear distinction between 'explanation' and 'understanding' should only be taken as a guide, as many interpretivists seek to explain and positivists would hope their analyses help us understand social phenomena.

It was reassuring to me that there was a readiness to accept that the categories do overlap as it would potentially prove difficult to align the whole research project within one distinct category if that was not the case.

According to Hollis (1999, p41),

> positivism is a term with many uses in social science and philosophy. At the broad end, it embraces any approach which applies scientific method to human affairs conceived as belonging to a natural order open to objective enquiry.

The human affair of the mentoring relationship could be perceived as 'belonging to a natural order' if we were able to concur those students and mentors progressed along the same linear path, from the beginning of the mentoring process to the end, as described within the documentation. As the mentoring process was not entirely captured by that guiding documentation but was as varied and individual as the participants involved then the process could not be described as belonging to a 'natural order'. Understanding the mentoring process was not open to objective enquiry because actions could not be separated from the actors and how they perceived themselves. Denscombe (2002, p14) stated that positivists believe 'there are patterns and regularities, causes and consequences, in the social world just as there are in the natural world', I would argue that these exist in singular relationships between mentors and their mentees but they do not necessarily transfer across from one mentoring relationship to another, given the individual nature of each mentoring relationship.

In considering each of the basic assumptions of positivism, as summarised by Bryman (2004, p11):

- Only phenomena and knowledge confirmed by the senses can be warranted as knowledge (phenomenalism)
- Theories are used to generate hypotheses that can be tested and allow explanations of laws to be assessed (deductivism)
- Knowledge can be produced by collecting facts that provide the basis for laws (inductivism)
- Science can and must be conducted in a way that is value free and thus objective.
- There is a clear distinction between scientific and normative statements

within the specific context of my research project, I could identify one aspect of alignment. At the beginning of the process, my interest arose from the phenomena of students' emotional responses and passive behaviour when I visited them in school. According to Bryman's (2004, p11) assumptions of positivism, this could therefore be warranted as knowledge; this

was an aspect of a positivist approach apparent in my work. However, considering the remaining assumptions, my work would not be aligned with a positivist approach beyond that. My research did not progress from that initial identification of phenomena with hypotheses to be tested but instead, with questions to be addressed by developing an understanding of how participants in the process perceived that process, and each other. This understanding could not be gained by collecting facts about the process, but by listening to the participants' voices. I was interested in the lived experiences of mentees and mentors, in an effort to understand what the hidden aspects of mentoring were, these were not experiences which could always be 'observed', or heard directly, at first hand, and could not be collected as 'facts'. The positivist approach which 'seeks to reduce everything to abstract and universal principles, and tends to fragment human experience rather than treat it as a complex whole' (Ryan, 2015, p25) would be at odds with one which sought to investigate any lived experiences. Even if I were able to observe these experiences, I still would not be in a position to understand what the participants' perceptions of those experiences were, without engaging in a dialogue with them. I understood that there was not a 'truth' to be uncovered but rather 'truths, according to my participants', their own interpretations of their experiences. According to Beck and Bonß (1989, cited in Flick, 2018, p5) 'science no longer produces 'absolute truths' which can uncritically be adopted.' Within my research, I knew I would not be seeking absolute truths but the truths of my participants, illustrative of an anti-positivist stance.

As a tutor, involved directly in the mentoring of students, it would be challenging to conduct the research in a way that was value free, again this was not aligned with a positivist's approach. I acknowledged that I would need to be aware of any subjective stance within my research and be ready to reflect upon the impact of that subjectivity e.g. in the selection of which aspects of a participant's responses which I found interesting and those which I deemed not to be interesting and would consequently pay less attention to. According to

Freud (1958, p112, cited in Flick, 2018, p126) it would be central to the integrity of a project that pre-conceived ideas and assumptions would need to be recognised and put aside:

> as soon as anyone deliberately concentrates his attention to a certain degree, he begins to select from the material before him; one point will be fixed in his mind with particular clearness and some other will be correspondingly disregarded, and in making this selection he will be following his expectations or inclinations. This, however, is precisely what must not be done. In making this selection, if he follows his expectations, he is in danger of never finding anything but what he already knows; and if he follows his inclinations, he will certainly falsify what he may perceive.

My initial intuition, 'broadly defined as extra-rational ways of knowing, honed from experience' (Ryan, 2015, p37) was that there must be some aspects of the process which were unsettling for students, however, beyond that I had no expectations of what it was that was happening. Consequently, I was not setting out to prove a hypothesis about what was happening within the mentoring process but to investigate what was happening. I was therefore able to approach the investigation with a level of objectivity, being prepared to listen to the participants in an effort to find out, whilst recognising that I needed to be aware of any subjectivity, arising from my own mentoring experiences. I was aware that I might not be in a position to be able to explain all of those experiences but rather, I could work towards offering possible explanations for discussion, thus raising awareness in the participants. As a researcher who had worked in the field, and been in the position of the participants themselves, my suggested explanations could not be from an entirely objective stance but I would argue that that brought a depth of understanding, and insight, to my research. This was in direct conflict with Freud's stance in that I believed my subjectivity would support my interpretations. At this point I recognised that I would be interpreting the interpretations of my study's participants and Hollis (1999, p146) explained that positivists do not recognise what Giddens termed 'the double hermeneutic', the act of interpreting an actor's perception or interpretation, effectively an interpretation of an interpretation. My research would be based on my interpretation of participants' interpretations and could consequently be described as

an example of Giddens' term, 'the double hermeneutic' and not recognised as valid by positivists.

As also indicated earlier on Grix's continuum (2010, p79) 'Positivists lay great emphasis on explanation in social research, as opposed to understanding, and many believe that the 'real purpose of explanation is prediction' (Rubinstein, 1981, p11). Before being able to offer any explanations for the phenomena, what was happening within the process of mentoring needed to be illuminated and understood, beyond that which was described in the guidance, and so my research would seem to precede any possible positivist approach. My research would not result in specific predictions but in exposing and identifying, for example, areas of tension. My research would subsequently support mentees and mentors in developing an awareness of, for example, what the trigger points for areas of tension might be and consequently develop an understanding of how their actions might appear to, and impact upon, each other thus supporting participants in dealing with identified areas of tension proactively.

Given that my research was aiming to not only understand but to offer explanations of observed phenomena then it would appear to lie some way between positivism and interpretivism:

> Since the 1970s, a powerful alternative to both positivism, with its search for regular laws, and interpretivism, with its emphasis on 'the interpretation of meaning' (Sayer, 2000, pp2-3), has grown in importance. Put simply, critical realist scholars have attempted to combine the 'how' (understanding – which is linked to interpretivism) and the 'why' (explanation – which is linked to positivism) approaches by bridging the gap between the two extremes (May, 2001, pp15–16).
> (Grix, 2010, p85)

Others, (Henderson, 2011; Ryan, 2015), in addition to Sayer (2000), Grix (2010) and May (2001), also saw post-positivism as an understanding which sits between interpretivism and positivism. Henderson (2011) believed that post-positivism addressed overly subjectivist ontological and epistemological stances prevalent in interpretivism. My research would be in

sympathy with an interpretivist stance as I initially sought to understand what was happening and then during the phase of data analysis would move towards a positivist stance as I looked to explain why that was happening, consequently resulting in the post-positivist stance of a critical realist.

My research principles were aligned with those of post-positivist research being described by Ryan (2015, p23) as those which

> emphasise meaning and the creation of new knowledge, and are able to support committed social movements, that is, movements that aspire to change the world and contribute towards social justice.

I would be endeavouring to illuminate, understand and offer explanations for what happens within the mentoring process with a view to empowering mentees, ultimately impacting upon their own practice positively and therefore the lives of the children they teach.

It was therefore evident that my approach to my research would be aligned with an interpretivist epistemology, other than my initial starting point, arising from phenomena witnessed by my senses; deemed as knowledge from a positivist's position.

3.2 Constructivist Grounded Theory

Glaser and Strauss (1967) were responsible for the conception of Grounded Theory. Glaser and Strauss stressed that the ambition of Grounded Theory was not to verify a preconceived theory, but rather to endeavour to discover a theory arising from the analysis of data. Subsequently, the researcher would arrive at a hypothesis (in the form of a theory) at the conclusion of the research. According to Kenny and Fouire (2014, p1)

> To achieve this objective Glaser and Strauss insisted that the researcher must approach the study inductively, with no preconceptions to prove or disprove, in order to uncover (and ultimately conceptualise) the principal concern of participants. The methodology stipulated that the researcher should not know (or predict) in advance where the unfolding research will lead or what the concluding hypothesis would encompass

As my project initially set out to investigate what was happening, rather than verify what was happening, it was aligned with a basic principle of Grounded Theory. However, I could not pretend that I would not have preconceptions about what was happening, and why, as I had extensive experience within the field, as a professional who had performed both of the roles held by the study's participants. This would be at odds with Grounded Theory in terms of my ability to discover a theory in that I might well have had pre-conceived ideas about how something was, or should be, which in turn would affect my interpretation of the data. Urquhart and Fernandez (2013) felt that the idea of the researcher as a 'blank slate' was a misleading idea which plagues Grounded Theory and Charmaz (2014) believed that the notion was not a realistic proposition. As a researching professional, my position further resonated with Cook's (2009, p287) statement, 'Stakeholders are not separate from reality; their reality is the dynamic part of the picture and it is their notions of reality that ultimately shape practice.' I was not separate from the reality of the field which I set out to examine and my notions of that reality would be the dynamic part of my interpretation of the data. My experience would actively support me in constructing theory based on the emerging data as I could not be an 'objective' observer but instead would be an interpreter, with prior knowledge of the field, which would support me in making sense of the date, reflecting upon it and thus informing my interpretations of it. There would be multiple versions of reality arising from my research and, with my professional experience, I would not be separate from those realities as I worked to interpret them. I would be engaged in dialogue with my participants, about a world where I had direct personal experience. However, I believed my experience as a professional in the field would proactively assist me in being able to actively construct a Grounded Theory, This further resonated with Charmaz's constructivist interpretation of Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2006, pxi).Charmaz rejected Glaser's underlying philosophy of discovering an implicit theory, proposing that 'neither the data nor the theories are discovered' and stated that 'we construct our grounded theories through our past and present involvements and interactions with people, perspectives and research practices' (Charmaz, 2006, p10). I was reassured of this by Timonen et al. (2018, p3):

> Where classical GT [Grounded Theory] asserts that theory emerges from data, and is drawn out by the researcher in her role as a detached, yet reflexive scientific observer, CGT [Constructivist Grounded Theory] fully implicates the researcher in generating data and theory.

Charmaz adhered to the understanding that 'the pragmatist foundations [of Grounded Theory] encourage us to construct an interpretive rendering of the worlds we study rather than an external reporting of events and statements' (Charmaz, 2014, p339). Constructing that interpretive rendering of the world of mentoring in ITE would be enhanced by the researcher having a deep professional understanding of that world. However, I did take the term 'Grounded' seriously, as advised by Timonen et al (2018, p6) in that my study had 'to remain open to new, unanticipated findings and avoid 'hypothesis testing' style of inquiry'. Remaining open to the data was something I had to keep at the forefront of my mind as the study progressed. A specific example of that was after Phase 1 of my data collection, when I had conducted my student focus groups. An aspect that arose from those focus groups which I wanted to investigate further was that students had discussed incidents during the mentoring process which had distressed them or affected them emotionally. I wanted to be able to explore that with in the questions that I constructed for the population of students but I did not want to imply a certain type of answer so, instead of asking whether they had been upset by any aspect of the mentoring process I asked if they had been 'unsettled' as I felt that was a broader question which did not imply a particular type of response but would allow them to discuss being upset at that point if that had been the case. Throughout the analysis of the study's data, I found that my existing knowledge was useful to me in working out what was going on in it which was aligned with the thoughts of Timonen et al. (2018, p6), 'Existing knowledge and even "hunches" about possible explanations for what is going on in the data can help us to make better sense of the data.' Charmaz also moved away from the 'methodological rules, recipes, and requirements' of Strauss' highly systematic coding process as she perceived this to be too prescriptive (Charmaz, 2006, p9). Instead Charmaz proposed more flexible 'guidelines' which would 'raise questions and outline strategies to

indicate possible routes to take' (Charmaz, 2006, p. xi). Thus, she departed significantly from both Classic and Straussian Grounded Theory, reconfiguring it as Constructivist Grounded Theory. With that came the understanding that a Grounded Theory researcher cannot be an impartial observer, as they inevitably yield an interpretive influence over their analysis, and actively construct, rather than neutrally discover, a Grounded Theory.

In conclusion, to broadly summarise underpinning of my project's methodology, it would sit within anti-foundationalist ontological and interpretivist epistemological stances aligned with a post-positivist paradigm. My subsequent approach was aligned with the principles of Constructivist Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2006).

As discussed, this study focused on an environment that was inherently complex, driven by human interaction and the social construction of shared understanding. As such, a qualitative approach consistent with interpretive inquiry offered this study the most appropriate methodology to explore and investigate meaning, associated with the experience of the people involved (Flick, 2018; Lincoln & Guba 1985). Robert-Holmes (2008) highlighted the value of interpretive research where complex relationships exist and referred to the ideas of Weedon (1987) on the chaotic and often irrational nature of such environments, to support his claim that the multiplicity of interaction leads to multiple understandings that add validity to the research. He also referred to Hughes (2001) to emphasise the validity of this knowledge where it represented the authentic and true voice of the participants.

> The view that knowledge is hard, objective and tangible will demand of researchers an observer role, together with an allegiance to the methods of natural science; to see knowledge as personal, subjective and unique, however, imposes on researchers an involvement with their subjects and a rejection of the ways of the natural scientist. To subscribe to the former is to be positivist; to the latter, anti positivist.
> (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2010, p7)

The intentions of this study were consistent with the ideas of Cohen et al (2010) described above where the interpretive researcher 'begins with individuals and sets out to understand

their interpretations of the world around them. Theory is emergent and must arise from particular situations' (Cohen et al., 2011, p18). Working with experience and knowledge, and where theory evolves into a set of meanings that provide insight and deeper understanding of people's behaviour is consistent with an interpretivist's approach. This interpretive perspective, as opposed to those aligned with positivist normative paradigms, had the most appropriate underlying philosophical framework to successfully guide this process of investigation. However, in adopting an interpretive research model there was a need to be aware of the criticism that had been levelled at such approaches in order to minimize weakness in the research and confidently defend the validity of its findings.

Educational research has been heavily criticised in the past by the positivistic social science lobby (Argyle 1978; Bernstein 1974) for its inconclusive and highly subjective attempts to identify a definitive basis to describe the learning and teaching process. However, in a paper that recounted the aftermath of the 'Paradigm Wars', Gage (1989) provided a strong retrospective defence of the interpretive model:

> Scientific methods can be applied only to natural phenomena that are stable and uniform across time, space, and context in a way obviously untrue of the human world of teaching and learning…. we should not search for the kind of prediction and control that scientific method might yield but rather for the kind of insight that historians, moral philosophers, novelists, artists, and literary critics can provide. (Gage, 1989, p152)

Bassey (1999) believed that more recent criticism of educational research, and its interpretive foundations, was inextricably linked to the lack of a widely accepted definition of what it was in terms of its specific purpose and focus. In support of its credibility he suggested that there were several forms (sociological, psychological, historical, economic, action research) all of which could be 'seen as informing educational judgements and decisions in order to improve educational action' (Bassey, 2011, p149). The educational action which this study set out to improve was the model of mentoring practice, employed by University X, in supporting students making the transition to qualified teachers.

A final point, as I provided a justification for my approach to this research, was to return to the closing comments of Gage (1989) where he reminded us that the end concern of educational research, aside from the philosophical position it takes, is a moral obligation to ensure that positive outcomes for children are ensured. It is a perspective that I held to strongly and the aim of research that ultimately focussed on supporting student teachers must also impact upon the learning and well-being of the children whom they teach.

3.3 Research Design

According to Denzin and Lincoln, (2000, p3),

> Qualitative researchers study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

A qualitative study, consistent with the interpretive paradigm, should follow a process of inquiry conducted in natural settings that aims to build understanding of social phenomena by formulating a complex, holistic picture using detailed reporting of the participants' views (Cresswell, 2003). There was further agreement (Denscombe 2005; Denzin & Lincoln 1994,) that qualitative data consists of discourse and text that may result from close observation, interview and careful documentation. The concern here was with the meanings that would emerge through the thoughtful analysis of this data and an acceptance that the outcome may not be a scientific generalization but a deeper contextual understanding.

As my study was located within the field of the mentoring process of students, making the transition to becoming teachers, being mentored by school-based mentors in one university's partnership then it could be assumed that my study would be a 'case study' (Flick, 2018, p118). However, it needs to be noted that even though all of the student participants were located within our partnership a number of the mentors had worked with other institutions and so their mentoring experiences might not have been solely in working with our students, consequently this could not be a case study in its purest form. Despite this, the action orientated perspective of case study methodology did resonate with my work and I proposed to employ a case study approach to this piece of research. Yin (1984)

suggested that there were several types of case study defined by the nature of their outcome: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. I would be exploring the nature of student/mentor relationships; describing those relationships and then offering explanations which would inform mentor training and thus contribute to models of effective mentoring.

Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2010, p256) referred to views of Adelman et al (1980) in suggesting the action orientated perspective of case study work as being a particular strength,

> Case studies are a 'step to action'. They begin in a world of action and contribute to it. Their insights may be directly interpreted and put to use; for staff or individual self development, for within institutional feedback…. and in educational policy making.

Case study research, according to Bassey (1999), does not rely on specific methods of data collection or analysis but draws from an eclectic range that is practical and fit for purpose. Bassey (1999, p81) suggested that the underlying methodology for collecting data should be one of 'asking questions and listening intently to the answers'.

The study design would be dictated by the research aims, introduced in 1.6 Research Aims (p22) and replicated here as a reminder:

- explore the mentor-student relationship within assessed school-based placements on a University-based ITE provider's (University X) Initial Teacher Education Programmes, in the northeast of England
- identify and explore the features of what students, and school-based mentors, perceive to be effective mentoring
- identify the barriers to effective mentoring
- develop a conceptual framework, emerging from the data, which would underpin a model of mentoring to support students in the mentoring process and in turn support mentors in achieving 'mentor standards' (TSC, 2016)

which were concerned with the experiences of student teachers, and mentors, with respect to the mentoring process. The rationale was related to a reflective approach to improving practice and how, as a provider of Initial Teacher Education, University X might further

support student teachers in their transition from student to qualified teacher. Hence, a step into action.

According to the Department of Health and National Assembly for Wales's publication, *Research Governance Framework for Health and Social Care* (2009, cited by Northumbria University, 2017, p8) 'Research can be defined as the attempt to derive generalisable new knowledge by addressing clearly defined questions with systematic and rigorous methods'. Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2011), suggested that research, when combined with experience and reasoning, can lead to a deeper understanding in a search for truth. This study represented such an approach where the overarching research questions:

- What happens when students are mentored?
- How do mentors support students effectively in becoming competent teachers?

stemmed from my personal experience and where reasoning and reflection were integral to this professional practice. Consequently, the process of research in this case was guided by interpretative principles and enriched by experience.

As research is 'an organised, systematic and logical process of inquiry, using empirical information to answer questions' (Punch, 2009 p10), incorporating four main features, outlined below:

- Framing research by research questions
- Determining what data are necessary
- Designing research to collect and analyse those data
- Using data to answer the questions

then in order to address the study's aims, the two key research questions initially identified framed the research.

- What happens when students are mentored?
- How do mentors support students effectively in becoming competent teachers?

According to Punch's (2009) model of research, the process ends when those initial questions are answered, however, in my experience those answers then informed further, more focussed, research questions. These became a set of sub-questions, designed to

assist in addressing the over-arching research questions, framing the research, and ultimately the study's aims more effectively:

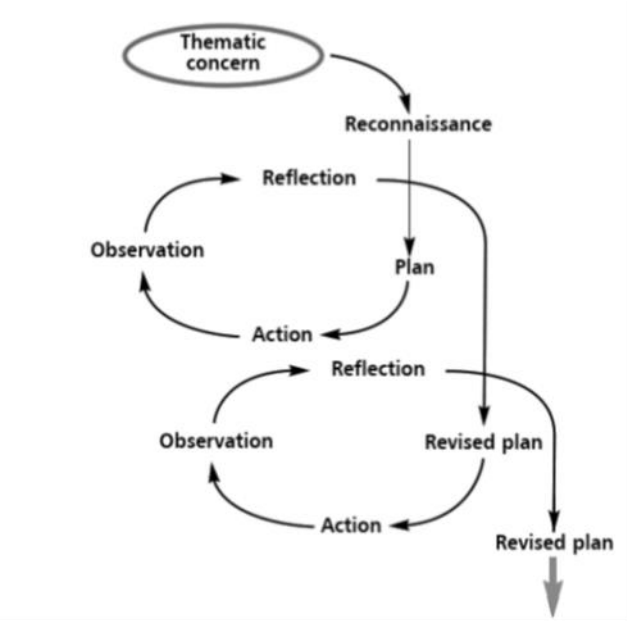
- What do mentors and students perceive to be effective support for students making the transition to teacher?
- What do mentors and students understand about the role of the mentor?
- What do mentors consider to be the desirable attributes of a mentee?
- What do students consider to be the desirable attributes of a mentor?
- What aspects of the mentoring process do students and mentors find challenging?
- What do students do to ensure that the mentoring experience is positive?

These further research questions were generated after what became an initial pilot of data collection, in student focus group discussions. I had intended to gather students' views via focus group discussions, however, I realised quite quickly that I needed to change my data collection methods, this was also aligned with the study's constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2014; Timonen et al., 2018):

> it is the immediate interpretation of collected data that provides the basis for sampling decisions. These decisions are not limited to selecting cases, but also comprise the decisions about the type of data to integrate next and – in extreme cases – about changing the method
>
> (Flick, 2018, p127).

The reason why I changed the method was because the data that was yielded from the students' focus group discussion was not addressing the study's aims sufficiently, this will be explained further later in the chapter. What I learned from the focus group discussions impacted upon the next round of data collection from student participants, in the form of questionnaires to whole cohorts. The focus group responses clarified not only what to ask the students but how to frame the questions. Thus, the research process was not linear but spiral, as reflected by Kemmis and McTaggart's action research spiral (see Figure 12, p104).

Figure 12: The Action Research Spiral (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988, cited in Kemmis et al., 2014)



I was engaging in action research given Carr and Kemmis' (1986, p162) definition of that as 'simply a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations' with the purpose of:

- Improving practice
- Improving understanding of practice
- Improving the situation in which the practice takes place.

I was involved as a 'researching professional' (Wellington & Sikes, 2006, p725), researching the mentoring process with the aim of effecting positive change in my own practice and practice that I was directly involved in. Thus, it made sense that my observations and reflections, on particular situations, would be ongoing and never-ending if I was committed to continually developing that educational practice in the socially active context (Atkins & Wallace, 2012, p135) of mentoring in ITE, within the confines of the study's remit.

3.4 Conceptualisation of the Methodological Approach

Revisiting the study's methodology at this point highlighted to me that this would be an appropriate point at which to bring my approaches together and be clear about my positionality as a researcher, before addressing the data collection tools used. In order to do this, I constructed an image (Figure 13: Conceptualisation of the methodological approach, p107) to assist me in articulating my stance and approach.

I entered into the study as a 'researching professional' (Wellington & Sikes, 2006, p725), engaged in research informed by the principles of action research (Carr & Kemmis,1986), understanding that to be:

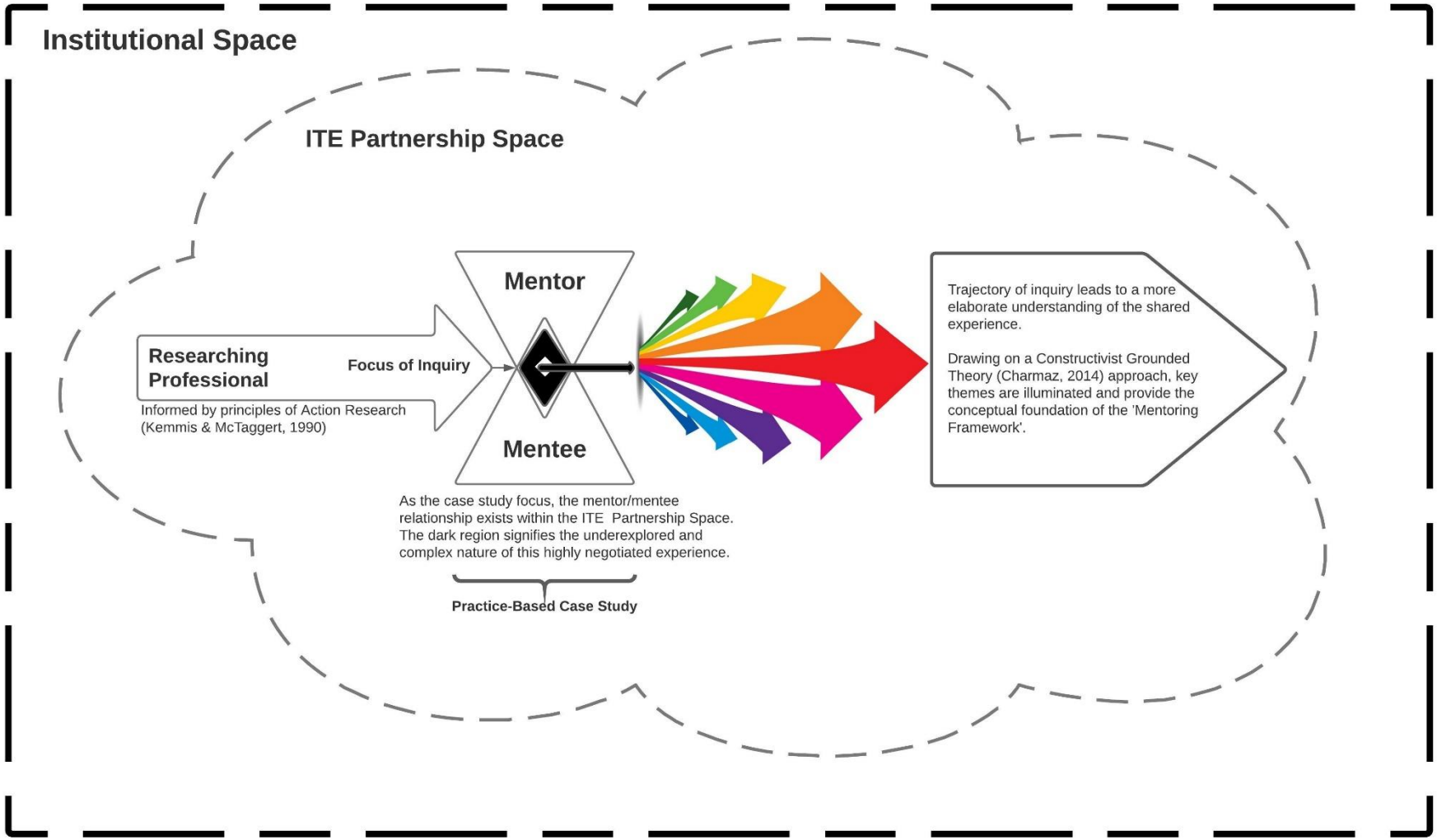
> …a form of collective self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out.
> (Kemmis and McTaggert,1990, p5)

This understanding chimed with my study as I was to be engaged in a self-reflective inquiry of the educational practices, of which I contributed to, to inform my own practice and the practice of the community in which I worked. The self-reflective inquiry was collective because it involved me, as a university teacher educator, teacher mentors and mentees; those directly involved in the process of mentoring. The aim of this was to improve the quality of experiences for those involved in the mentoring process and ultimately the children they taught.

I was working within the subject area of ITE within an Institute of Higher Education. The model represents the boundaries of both of those domains with dashed lines, denoting that the boundaries are not fixed, activity flows across these boundaries. The clearly defined, darker outer boundary describes the Institutional Space in which there are a number of faculties focussed on a variety of disciplines. The dashed line describing the cloud like space houses the area of ITE, sitting within a faculty which contains disciplines relating to Health and Life sciences, of which ITE is one. Its boundary is less strongly defined to demonstrate the softer grey edges in that there would be many more informal links between it and other

areas, whereas the Institutional boundary would be more defined in that the passage of activity from one institution to another would likely be more formal. My study sits within the ITE Partnership Space and the Mentor/Mentee relationship is an aspect of practice which sits within it. As the researching professional my focus is on the dark area which signifies the under explored and complex relationship between mentor and mentee. It is a case study by default as the area I investigated is encapsulated within one ITE partnership's space. My intent was to metaphorically shine a light into that dark prism-like space and in turn that light would be refracted into its constituent colours. These colours represent the illumination of the dark space and identification of what was happening within it. Given that I had significant experience in the field I would work with those findings to construct an understanding of what was happening and use that to inform a framework for mentoring, thus my approach would also be informed by the principles of Constructivist Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2014).

Figure 13: Conceptualisation of the methodological approach



3.5 Focus Group Discussion

A Constructivist Grounded Theory methodology would support the use of focus group discussions aimed at gathering experiences and providing the basis for a rich discussion. According to Barbour and Kitzinger (1999, p20), 'any group discussion may be called a focus group as long as the researcher is actively encouraging of, and attentive to, the group interaction.' The hallmark of focus groups being 'the explicit use of group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group' (Morgan, 1988, p12). I believed that participants would actively remind each other of their own experiences during the discussion and that an informal atmosphere would engender real conversation about the topic.

The focus group stage generated a significant amount of useful information. Robert-Holmes (2005) presented a useful perspective on conducting interviews of a semi-structured nature which resonated with my approach to facilitating the focus group discussions where I also took on the role of interviewer. He suggested that the interviewer should adopt the role of facilitator encouraging the research participant to 'speak their mind' on issues that are pertinent to the study focus.

> The interviewer 'gets the ball rolling' and thereafter listens carefully, asking for development of issues as they arise during the conversation. Where necessary the interviewer will ask a direct question but the direction and content of the conversation stems from the research participant.
> Robert-Holmes (2005, p109)

I facilitated 2 focus group discussions of students who had been mentored on at least one placement and 2 focus group discussions of school-based mentors. I over-recruited by 30% to allow for those who for any reason could not attend so that I had enough participants to form a representational group. I aimed for each focus group to be made up of 5 participants to sit comfortably at a circular table and so invited 7/8 to each meeting. Each meeting lasted between 45 minutes and an hour. I used focus groups to gather reasonable numbers of

people together to gauge multiple perspectives about the research topic which would potentially be emotive and lead to contrasting, if not conflicting, opinions.

By ‘focus group’ I meant ‘organised discussion’ with a selected group of individuals to gain collective views about my research topic (Punch, 2009). I led the discussion using questions to initiate the discussion around the theme. The discussions were digitally recorded. I had initially thought I would take field notes during the discussions, as suggested as being useful (Flick, 2018) but I decided not to do that. Quite quickly, I found that taking notes prevented me from actively listening to my participants and from maintaining a level of informality (Puchta and Potter, 2004) to create a liberal climate where participants felt able to talk as freely as possible. I transcribed the discussions afterwards so that I was able to make any appropriate memos, which would not have been captured by the recording device. Given that I had not taken notes during the discussions it was important to do this as soon as I was able to. The focus groups were used to learn from the participants’ experiences and also to develop my understanding of the possible perceptions of the everyday language which was used within the discourse of ‘mentoring’. The reporting of findings would also demonstrate any relevant interactions between participants and potentially a consideration of how participants could influence each other.

3.5.1 Ethical Dilemmas and Focus Groups

I appreciated that there were ethical dilemmas surrounding the use of focus groups. It would be impossible to guarantee anonymity or confidentiality because all participants would know who each other were and hear each other’s contributions, even if they did not share them beyond the group. There were also particular challenges associated with focus group discussions such as complex verbal and non-verbal responses potentially proving to make analysis and interpretation problematic. In addition, there were contextual issues to consider for the different groups. The environmental context would be important to consider for mentor participants as they could be affected by their location. For example, University X

would not be a sufficiently neutral space for their discussions as it was a secure place for the researcher rather than the participants and they may not feel able to talk as freely. It would also incur a considerable investment of time for them in travelling to and from the university to participate in the discussions. The timing aspect was crucial for the student focus groups. There was a need to organise the focus groups when students had had experience of being mentored but not during placement when they were already experiencing considerable pressure and an increased workload. However, the discussions needed to be close enough to a placement so that their mentoring experiences to reflect upon were 'fresh'. I aimed to provide what I considered to be the optimum time, two weeks after the students had completed their placement and had also submitted their final assignment of the year. I provided refreshments for the four focus groups as I believed this would help to create a more relaxed atmosphere conducive to conversation and would also recognise the time they were giving. According to Cohen et al. (2011, p437), focus groups may discourage certain people from participating, for example those who are not articulate or confident but I hoped that, by the very nature of the profession they were either in, or entering, that they would be people who were generally happy about talking in a group.

An interview guide was prepared but I was prepared not to have my questions covered and I expected that there would be areas of discussion covered which I had not anticipated. I undertook introductions for each participant and set out ground rules e.g. I asked them not to identify mentors, schools or student teachers or schools by name during the group discussion for ethical reasons. To 'get the ball rolling' (Robert-Holmes, 2005, p109) I began the discussions with an ice-breaker activity where I gave them images of famous fictional mentors to look at (Appendix 16: Focus Group Ice Breaker & Elicitation Exercise). This was also in line with Flick (2018) who noted that it was important to start a focus group with some kind of warm up activity. I asked them who they would choose for a mentor and why. This not only set the tone for a more relaxed conversation (Puchta & Potter, 2004) but elicited

their views on the ideal attributes of a mentor. I facilitated the discussions and thanked participants before summing up.

An interpretivist paradigm ‘concentrates on the meanings people bring to situations and behaviour, and which they use to understand their world’ (O’Donoghue, 2007, pp16-17). This was my starting point in focus group discussions where interesting stories could be shared and participants would build on each other’s experiences (Morgan, 1988). However, it became clear after the student focus group discussion that I would need a wider understanding of what happened to students whilst they were on placement, in addition to those individuals’ experiences, to address the study’s aims. It became apparent that the students who accepted the invitation to participate were those who felt they needed to air a grievance. This led me to the understanding that I needed to elicit responses from a greater proportion of the whole population so that the sample would be more representative of that population, this would mean that I could then infer the project’s findings back to the population. Multi-method approaches are well documented in interpretive research (Lincoln & Guba 1985, Gorard & Taylor 2004) where triangulation techniques are generally considered to enhance validity of the data and so I considered how I could use what I had learned from the focus group discussions to inform further data collection. What I was able to interpret from the sample who participated in the student focus group discussions impacted directly upon the questions then asked of the population of student teachers, this was recognised in the literature as being a useful application of focus groups (Flick, 2018, p262).

3.6 Surveys/Questionnaires

Although I knew that ‘no study can include everything; you cannot study everyone everywhere doing everything’ (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p27) I did realise that I needed to be able to gather data from a larger proportion of the student cohorts than was practicable in focus group discussions. As described by Groves et al. (2009, p20), ‘a "survey" is a

systematic method for gathering information from (a sample of) entities' and I needed a systematic tool which would potentially gather data from the whole population.

Using questionnaires allowed me to gather responses potentially from whole cohorts of student teachers, the population I was interested in, rather than from a sample of that population. As I was more interested in the qualitative data contained within the responses, than quantitative descriptors, the questions were open to allow for responses containing detail and description of experience. According to Peterson (2000, p3) 'An effective questionnaire is carefully structured to provide valid and reliable information at a reasonable cost.' In this case the 'reasonable cost' equated to an efficient use of time for both participants and the researcher. As 'the first - and overriding – guideline to follow when constructing a questionnaire is to make it easy to administer – consistent, of course, with the goals of the research project' (Peterson, 2000, p102) I ensured that the questionnaire was contained within two sides of A4, it was carefully proof-read and well presented to ensure that the approach was consistent with a that of a professional. I included consent and permission within the questionnaire itself to ensure clarity for the participants. The target groups for the questionnaires were the two whole cohorts of students who I was delivering sessions to about mentoring. One was a cohort of 2nd year undergraduate (BA) students and the other was a postgraduate (PGCE) cohort, both groups knew me as a member of university staff who taught into their programmes. The questionnaires focussed on aspects of their experiences which I wanted them to reflect upon during the session, as part of my teaching, and my sample became those who chose to give me their completed questionnaires at the end of the session, this was clearly a convenience sample as outlined by Punch (2009, p250). If they were happy for me to use their anonymised responses to the questions posed during my teaching session they completed and signed the a 'Statement of Confirmation' at the end of the questionnaire before handing it to me at the end of the session (See Appendix 11: Example of a Completed Questionnaire (PG94)).

To stay in control of the data collection, rather than leave it to others or to chance, I administered the questionnaires myself, face-to-face. I ensured that I spent time introducing the task, which was part of the teaching session, so that the participants were clear about what they were being asked to do. In the teaching episode the task was not framed as 'completing a questionnaire' as I was using it to encourage the students to reflect upon their experiences individually, before then engaging in discussion. Consequently, the students were reflecting upon the questions as part of the session and using these 'notes proformas' to record their own thoughts before sharing them more widely with others. The questions were used prompts for thought and discussion. The term questionnaire is the term used to refer to these notes, within the study. I hoped that students, having had the session with me around the subject of mentoring, and having already completed the task I was interested in as part of that session, would feel interested in and enthused about the project thus there would be a high response rate. Although the resulting samples were almost identical, in terms of size, in that I had 95 PGCE questionnaires and 91 BA questionnaires the rates of participation differed across each of the programmes. Interestingly, only 60% of the BA students accepted the invitation to participate by submitting the completed questionnaires, in comparison to 95% of the PGCE students who accepted the invitation. This difference in levels of participation warranted a level of reflection, I wondered why the response rate was higher for the PGCE cohort and considered potential reasons for why not so many BA students were happy to participate. I interpreted the response rate as perhaps being linked to my different positions on the programmes. The BA students knew me as a member of staff in a position of power as I was the Year Leader for the 3rd year of their programme at that time and consequently they might have felt inhibited in sharing any concerns with me. The PGCE students knew me as a member of staff with no direct link to their progression on the programme and so they may have felt less inhibited. The response rate may have also been linked with the students' levels of confidence, many of the BA cohort were considerably younger than the PGCE cohort and so they may not have felt as confident in sharing their views with me openly, perhaps fearing consequences for themselves. From an ethical

perspective, being aware of my position of power, the fact that 60% of the BA students handed in their complete questionnaires reassured me that they did not feel pressurised in giving them to me as 40% chose not to. As described by Atkins and Wallace (2012, p56)

> Despite potential participants being given the 'choice' of whether or not to participate, you should always give consideration to the possibility that they are making choices that are not their own, because they feel pressured in some way. This does not have to be as overt as a person in a less powerful position being 'told' to participate, but may be related to an individual's wish to 'do the right thing' or create a positive impression.

I was acutely aware of this as I was inviting students to participate and reassured them that they were able to decide independently whether or not they would be willing to share their session notes with me, without any penalty or consequence if they preferred to keep them to themselves.

The questions were structured to avoid bias by the order in which they were asked and answered. The questionnaire was piloted with my supervisor and colleagues and consequently I framed the questions in a way which might encourage students to think a little more deeply as the potential with a questionnaire might have been to answer briefly or without much thought. For example, instead of asking the participants to define 'mentor', I asked 'In your experience what are the three most useful things a mentor does?' starting this question with 'in your experience' would give them the confidence to respond with their opinions, rather than being concerned that they did not know the 'correct' answer. Then, by asking for the 'three most useful things a mentor does' I was asking about the role and purpose of a mentor which would ultimately inform a 'definition'. I asked 9 questions with Q5 being the question which I was particularly interested in as a number of participants in the focus groups had discussed feeling emotional at times in the mentoring process and I wanted to see if this was a theme which would emerge from the whole population.

The questions asked are set out below with the rationale for asking each question in italics underneath:

Q1	**In your experience what are the three most useful things a mentor does?** *To elicit their understanding of the role and purpose of the mentor*
Q2	**What have you learned from your mentor?** *To encourage them to reflect on the experience with a positive focus*
Q3	**What challenges have you encountered during the mentoring process?** *This question assumes that there would have been some challenge within the process therefore 'normalising' that notion and framing a 'challenge' as a learning experience*
Q4	**How did you deal with those challenges?** *Again, this presents a challenge as an opportunity for them to take an active role in dealing with it*
Q5	**Did any aspect of the mentoring process unsettle you? (If so please explain)** *This was a key question as a number of focus group participants cited an emotional response and so I wanted to research this further without asking directly which might make the responses less reliable, it was important that I kept researcher bias to a minimum to retain a sufficiently objective stance – the following 3 questions all sought further understanding of any aspect they identified here*
Q6	**How did you deal with that?** *Again, this question intimates that they could have had a role in dealing with that challenge and required them to reflect on their own part in the mentoring process*
Q7	**How could your programme have prepared you in dealing with that response?** *I wanted to know what the students thought we could do as a programme team to help them either prepare or to help them deal with this.*
Q8	**What did your mentor do to support you?** *A question positively framed to allow the students to think carefully about what support they had been given*
Q9	**How did you try to ensure that your experience of being mentored was positive?** *The final question, open to all participants regardless of how they had responded to Q5 to leave them with a feeling of 'empowerment' in the mentoring process*

The questionnaires were designed after consideration of the summary notes taken during the student focus group discussions where some initial themes began to emerge which influenced the construction of appropriate questions. In the focus group all but three participants used the term 'support' in their definitions of mentoring. This was interesting as it potentially suggested that the student participants saw this as more significant than the more reflective and shared process of mentoring. In turn the notion of 'support' needed to be explored further as there was evidently a need to understand what 'support' looked like to the student teacher. It became apparent in the data, collected from the focus groups, that the

participants all considered ‘support’ in slightly different ways. For instance, some felt supported by their teacher because the teacher ‘left’ them in the classroom and so the student felt ‘trusted’ whereas others felt as though they had been dropped in ‘at the deep end’ in these circumstances.

The student focus group discussions were recorded and notes taken but they were not transcribed. I had already realised, at this point, that they were not yielding data sufficiently representative of the population of student teachers. The mentor focus group discussions were recorded, transcribed and those transcriptions were analysed using thematic coding (Flick, 2018, p480). In considering both the focus group transcriptions and in the subsequent questionnaires I made use of a coding and memoing technique (Glaser, 1978, pp83-84) where I initially made descriptive codes, then inferential codes where I looked for emerging topics or patterns and then made use of analytical coding in an effort to understand what was happening. At the analytical coding point I was making use of memos which had conceptual content (Glaser, 1978), rather than simply descriptions of data. In handling the data from the questionnaires I worked broadly according to the structure presented by Miles and Huberman (1994) with a three step process:

> i Data Reduction, whilst maintaining context
> ii Data display, organising, compressing and assembling
> iii Drawing and verifying conclusions, becoming increasingly sharpened.

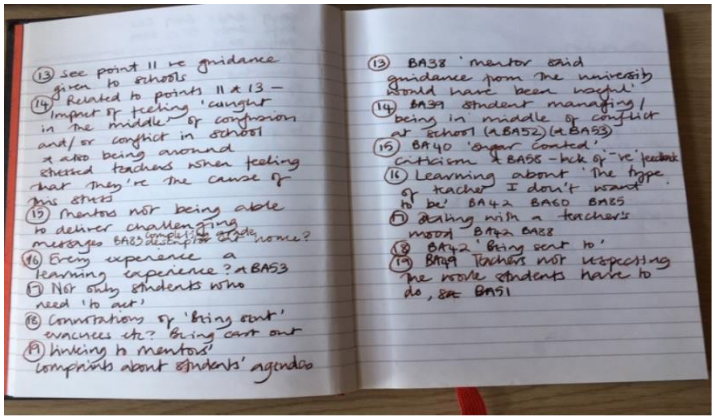
I did face particular challenges with each step. When lifting the data from the questionnaires I began initially to isolate responses to particular questions which resulted in a loss of context so to minimise that I then recorded the responses in a grid form with each participant having a row and then each response being in a different column (see Appendix 4: PG Student data and Appendix 5: BA Student data), this would mean I could read across for cases and down for themes, thus maintaining the context. To display the data in an accessible way, I compressed and assembled it into themes (e.g. see Appendix 10: Example of Compressing & Assembling Data from Student Questionnaires), keeping a note of

participants' codes under each heading so that their full responses could be easily tracked. I deviated from Miles and Huberman's (1994) process within their third step in that I drew conclusions but these were not to be verified, given that I knew I was dealing with individual truths within my interpretivist study (Heikkinen et al., 2007; Heikkinen at al., 2012). This methodological approach yielded rich qualitative data and provided the opportunity to create a thick description (Wiersma and Jurs 2009) of the students' experiences of being mentored and of the mentors' experiences of mentoring.

3.7 Approaching Data Analysis

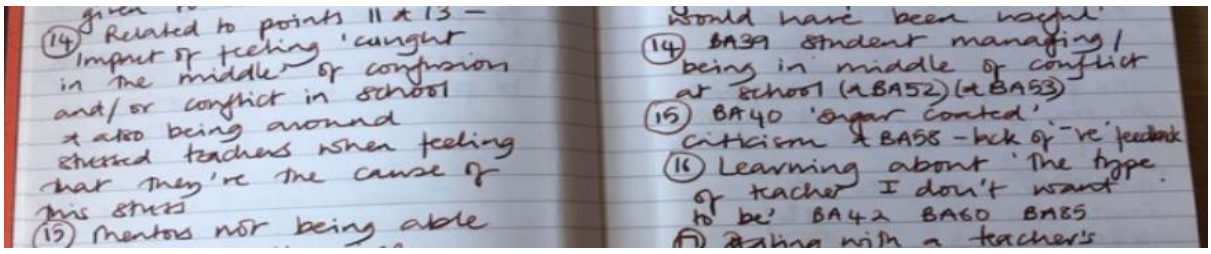
Student questionnaires were hand written (see Appendix 11: Example of a Completed Questionnaire (PG94) as an example) and subsequently converted to Word documents (see Appendix 4: PG Student data & Appendix 5: BA Student data) to make it possible to handle the data more easily, in terms of sifting and sorting. Converting the data myself was beneficial as it allowed me to become immersed in it and get 'an overall sense or feel for the data' (Wellington, 2000, p135) and become aware of potential arising themes as I worked. As described earlier, in the methodology chapter, the responses were recorded in a grid form with each participant having a row and responses to questions were in columns so that I could read across for cases and down for themes (Appendix 4: PG Student data & Appendix 5: BA Student data). Once I got to this point I was able to make use of Glaser's (1978) coding and memoing technique (see Figure 14, p118 and Appendix 12: Coding & Memoing (Glaser, 1978) for full-sized image). As I was converting the data I had made descriptive codes of what I considered to be interesting points, on the right hand side. As I progressed, I was able to begin making inferential codes and link participants' responses where there were emerging topics or patterns, on the left hand side.

Figure 14: Initial Coding & Memoing



In this way, I was able to begin coding analytically, to understand what was happening. Analytic notes were made on the left-hand page, mapping across to the descriptive and inferential coding on the opposite page. An example of this is below (Figure 15118) where I had made a note, on the right-hand page, under Point 14, of BA39 finding themselves in the middle of conflict at school. I then saw this in BA52's and BA53's responses so added their participant codes. My corresponding analytic notes were subsequently made on the left-hand page, under Point 14: 'Impact of feeling 'caught in the middle' of confusion and/or conflict in school and also being around stressed teachers when feeling that they're [mentees] the cause of the stress'. Once themes had been identified in this way I was able to begin compressing and assembling the student data (see Appendix 10: Example of Compressing & Assembling Data from Student Questionnaires: the compression and assembling of student data relating to 'Feedback') to make it more manageable.

Figure 15: Descriptive to inferential to analytic notes



As discussed in the methodology chapter, the mentor focus group discussions were recorded and transcribed. I transcribed these myself, which again was helpful in terms of me becoming familiar with my data (Wellington, 2000). The transcriptions were analysed using thematic coding (Flick, 2018, p478) (see Figure 16, p119). I began by considering the participants' responses to my questions, and their contributions to the ensuing discussion, to identify interesting points. These points were then compared, from across participants, to establish and categorise emerging thematic domains. Consequently, the data from the focus group discussions were analysed in much the same way as the data from the student questionnaires.

Figure 16: Excerpt of coded mentor data & corresponding codes

Themes	Codes
Agendas	**********
Communication	**********
Feedback	**********
Ideal mentee	**********
Ideal mentor	**********
Relationships	**********
Time	**********

M2 So yes – when he was in my class it brought out a side of mentoring that I didn't enjoy so I had to be really firm, really blunt and it wasn't fun erm, it was really difficult to try and deal with him the way he was and then because once they said they wouldn't fail him I just took over

M1 I think sometimes when it gets like emotional as well and when they bring in personal things from home because we all know as teachers and friends that things are happening at home and you can deal with it but as soon as you come in to work, or in the classroom, that personal side's got to go and I think when you're with a student and you're giving them bad feedback or etc and then they bring in something personal you're like er oh no or they start crying and you're like oh crap

M1 I found it difficult when we had a student, when we had a visit from the ex-prime minister, decided to tell the ex-prime minister that she had been 'put outside in the Early Years because she was a student so that she'd be out of the way when the ex prime minister came' and that it 'was because she was a lesbian', so things like that I found really difficult so when she said things like 'oh it's because I'm a lesbian' when she'd had a bad lesson I mean what do you say to that? No, if you were heterosexual I wouldn't like it either!

R1 So if we're thinking of that as being unsettling then did you feel that you weren't able to be honest with her in case she said that?

M1 Yes and because we work in pairs then there's always someone to support you or to back you up

M4 Yes, after that I didn't do a single observation or feedback on my own and then came in and did joint observations as well

M1 Yes, and when we had to speak to the last one when came in and at least 2 or 3 of us were there

M7 Because I think words could have been twisted

M4 Yes, exactly, twisted words – that's what you worry about

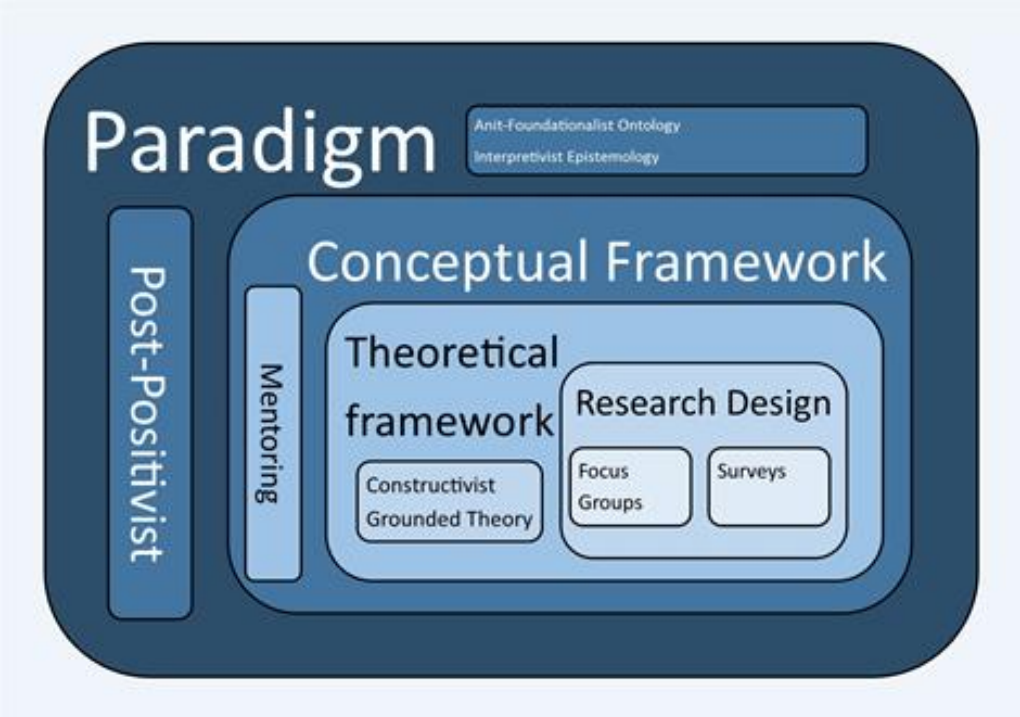
3.7.1 Identifying the Themes

Once I assembled the emerging themes (see Appendix 13: Assembling Emerging Themes), from the mentee data and from the mentor data, I then looked for links between the two sets and grouped them under broader headings (see Appendix 14: Making Links & Beginning to Group Themes). Some themes, such as 'feedback' were shared between student and mentor data. Some were particular to either mentors or mentees, for instance, mentors did not cite 'time' as an issue but mentees did and mentors cited students' 'attitude' as causing an issue but students did not. Thus, the data was reduced, organised, compressed and assembled (Miles & Huberman, 1994) in readiness for further analysis. Following a systematic process of evidence gathering and qualitative analysis this study was able to address its research aims.

3.8 Synopsis of the Research Design and Methods

This section expands on the ideas introduced in Chapter One: Introduction, using this figure (Figure 1, p27) as a visual representation:

Figure 1: Synopsis of the research design and methods



My ontological stance was anti-foundationalist, being aligned with Marsh and Smith's (2001, p530) understanding that 'not all social phenomena are directly observable' and those that are observable do not necessarily present the social and political world as it really is. Given that what I came to know what I knew, at the outset of my project, was based on my interpretations of my own experiences, then my epistemological stance was interpretivist (Keeney, 1983). My ontological and epistemological stances supported a post-positivist paradigm (Grix, 2010) which underpinned my desire to not only illuminate and understand what was happening, within the mentoring process, but also to offer an explanation, leading to informed ways forward.

I drew on the ideas of Constructivist Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2006; Charmaz, 2014), acknowledging that as a researching professional I would not be an impartial observer in the interpretation of any data gathered but rather I would actively use my knowledge and experience to help me make those interpretations, whilst being mindful of the need to remain open to the data (Timonen et al., 2018, p6). This was in line with the *construction* of theory, as opposed to the *discovery* of theory as one might expect in Classical Grounded Theory. As discussed earlier, the study was not a case study in the strictest sense, given that mentors would be reflecting upon their experiences of mentoring students from other providers. However, the research would still be aligned with case study methodology in that it was exploratory, descriptive and explanatory in nature (Yin, 1984), which related directly with my post-positivist stance.

In line with Bassey's (1999) assertion that case study methodology should be underpinned by asking questions and listening carefully I initially began the empirical aspect of the research process with focus group discussions of student teachers. It became immediately apparent that those student teachers, responding to the invitation to participate in the focus group discussions, were students who wanted to discuss their negative experiences of placement. At that point, I realised that I needed to gather a more balanced perspective of the mentoring process from students who had had a greater range of placements to be able to address the study's aims. I then adjusted my study design and gathered students' views

using a survey as a data gathering tool from two whole cohorts who I was teaching. As part of two teaching episodes I had asked students to respond to a set of questions about mentoring to help them reflect on aspects of their mentoring experiences and initiate reflective discussions. At the end of those sessions I spoke with the cohorts about my research study and if they were happy for me to use their anonymised responses to the questions, posed during my teaching session, they completed and signed a 'Statement of Confirmation' at the end of the questionnaire before leaving it with me at the end of the session. In essence, I was broadening the participant base of my focus group discussions but instead of transcribing the discussions was collecting participants' notes. Case study research does not rely on specific methods of data collection or analysis, instead there is a recognition that it can draw from an eclectic range, as long as it is practical and fit for purpose (Bassey, 1999). Consequently, the use of surveys was appropriate as it addressed the need to capture experiences, and interpretations of those experiences, from a sample of students which was more representative of the whole population. I continued to use focus group discussions as data gathering tools with two groups of school-based mentors, with one group having six participants and the other having seven. In the school-based mentor discussions I did not encounter the same phenomena of participants wanting to use the discussions as a forum for airing grievances. I then thematically analysed (Flick, 2018, p480) transcriptions of the focus group discussions and the questionnaires, looking for emerging topics and patterns before using analytic coding (Glaser, 1978) to interpret the data effectively.

3.9 Validity and Reliability or, Ensuring Quality

'The concept of validity is rooted in realist ontology and the foundational epistemology of quantitative inquiry' (Heikkinen et al., 2012, p5) and Denzin (1988, p432) observed that:

> By making qualitative research "scientifically" respectable, researchers may be imposing schemes of interpretation on the social world that simply do not fit that world as it is constructed and lived by interacting individuals

Instead, as Seale (1999, p15) said 'we live in a postmodern world of multiple selves and endless fragmentation of experience'. Heikkinen et al. (2012, p6) made clear that, within the literature, issues of validity in particular are contentious in interpretive inquiry:

> A number of advocates for qualitative research think we should forget the concept of validity because it carries heavy connotations of the post-positivistic and statistical research paradigms (Angen 2000; Denzin and Lincoln 2005; Hatch and Wisniewski 1995). Nevertheless, others think we still need the concept of validity (for example, Feldman 2007; Newton and Burgess 2008).

Consequently, there would be consequences for a research project such as mine as quality does matter in qualitative research (Seale, 1999, p18) but the notions, and terms, of 'validity' and 'reliability' were not necessarily appropriate. Manion & Morrison (2010) suggested that research is worthless if the data is deemed to be invalid and referred to Winter (2000) to indicate how this can be guarded against,

> …in qualitative data validity might be addressed through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved, participants approached, the extent of triangulation and the disinterestedness or objectivity of the researcher.
> (Winter, 2000, cited by Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2010, p133)

In consideration of the notion of 'reliability' I felt that any criticism of a lack of replicability, or generalisability, would seem inappropriate given that my work was aligned with Schofield's perspective:

> the goal is not to produce a standardized set of results that any other careful researcher in the same situation, would have produced.
> Rather it is to produce a coherent and illuminating description of and perspective on a situation.
> (Schofield, 1993, p93)

In addition, Bassey (1999) suggested that the concepts of reliability and validity are not vital to case study methods and adopted the idea of trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and the underpinning ethic of respect for truth. His argument is supported by highlighting the

paradox (Simons, 1996) between the notion of case study as a study of singularity and that of a need to demonstrate a degree of generalizability to support the validity of such work. Denscombe (2005) developed this further, referring to the suggestion by Yin (1984) that case studies are 'one of a type' and as such external validity is limited to the similarity with others of the particular 'type'. In this respect, the findings of this study may be representative only of similar samples of student teachers engaged on similar programmes of study engaged in a process where the same research methods have been employed by a similarly experienced researcher.

The essential element in this discussion is to acknowledge the limitations of this study whilst ensuring that internal validity (Bassey,1999; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011) is assured as far as possible, through the use of appropriate methods. Lincoln & Guba (1985) provided useful guidance in this respect, suggesting that a case study approach was consistent with the principles of naturalistic inquiry that acknowledges the human setting and its socio-cultural situation, where data is descriptive and the concern is with process rather than outcome. This paradigm accepted the researcher as an integral component of the research environment and therefore the notion of 'disinterestedness' proposed by Winter (2000) could be dispelled and claims for internal validity of this multi-method approach to research could be upheld.

Issues of bias, however, with respect to this internal validity were important to acknowledge, particularly in relation to the position of the researcher as a researching professional. investigating practice from the inside. Because of this position, there was a need to remain open to the data, as discussed earlier in the chapter. From the outset, I mitigated against the possibility of interpreting interviewees' responses in a way that did not reflect their true meaning by ensuring that my questions were open and scrutinised by my supervisor, who checked explicitly for sings of bias. A further example of how I mitigated against this would be discussing samples of participants' responses with my supervisors, in one of my supervision meetings, in itself a form of triangulation of interpretation. At this point it also

needs to be acknowledged that the experience of having been in the roles of both sets of participants allowed me to consider the data from different viewpoints thus ensuring a fair interpretation.

The position of power within the researcher-participant relationship also needed to be acknowledged and addressed. For example, Anderson (1998) identified a number of weaknesses in relation to the interview stage, suggesting that the interviewee might provide responses that the researcher would like to hear and that these in turn could be interpreted in a way that did not reflect the interviewee's true meaning. To counter this, as the facilitator of the focus groups, I ensured that I established a positive and informal approach. Anderson (1998) accepted that this, together with the conversational approach to questioning, could help to minimize the negative aspects of the 'power position'. In addition, after the focus group discussions, I returned the transcripts to the mentors for them to read and confirm that they were happy with how their voices had been captured. If they were not happy then they had the opportunity to amend the transcript to ensure that how they were recorded sat comfortably with them, however, none of the mentors requested any changes and they all signed the transcriptions to confirm that they were happy that the transcriptions did indeed represent their contributions accurately. When the mentee participants had completed their questionnaires, they were clear that they were under no obligation to submit them to me to be used as data, once the teaching session had ended. As 40% of one of the cohorts declined the offer to participate then I was reassured that those who did submit their responses were happy to do so.

Although I had considered, and then rejected, the notions and terms of validity and reliability I still needed to be reassured that my study was secure as a piece of research. This was when I turned to Heikkinen et al., (2012, pp6-8) who proposed a new conceptualisation for quality within action research, the five principles of validation:

> **1. Principle of historical continuity**
> *Analysis of the history of action: how has the action evolved historically?*
> *Emplotment: how logically and coherently does the narrative proceed?*

2. Principle of reflexivity
Subjective adequacy: what is the nature of the researcher's relationship with his/her object of research?
Ontologic and epistemologic presumptions: what are the researcher's presumptions of knowledge and reality?
Transparency: how does the researcher describe his/her material and methods?

3. Principle of dialectics
Dialogue: how has the researcher's insight developed in dialogue with others?
Polyphony: how does the report present different voices and interpretations?
Authenticity: how authentic and genuine are the protagonists of the narrative?

4. Principle of workability and ethics
Pragmatic quality: how well does the research succeed in creating workable practices?
Criticalness: what kind of discussion does the research provoke?
Ethics: how are ethical problems dealt with?
Empowerment: does the research make people believe in their own capabilities and possibilities to act and thereby encourage new practices and actions?

5. Principle of evocativeness
Evocativeness: how well does the research narrative evoke mental images, memories or emotions related to the theme?

I mapped my work to these principles to justify my work as a piece of good action research: I had adhered to the principle of historical continuity by charting, in the study's introduction, the way that the action evolved historically from the original rationale for the work onwards to the logical and coherent procedure of my narrative. To address the principle of reflexivity I had made clear my relationship with the object of my research, I was a researching professional investigating the practices of the institution within which I worked. For the student participants I was in a position of power given that I was a university tutor with programme leadership responsibilities. For the mentor participants I could also be seen to be in position of power as I would be interpreting their discussions of their mentoring experiences for which their schools would be paid by my institution. My presumptions of knowledge and reality were based on my own experiences of working within the field, having held, at various times, the roles of all participants in my study. I had described my methods transparently within my methodology chapter. The principle of dialectics was at the core of the study, in using a Constructivist Grounded Theory approach I had worked with the date

emerging from my participants to construct a way forward in the development of a framework for mentoring. The report represented the voices of all participants who were genuine participants directly involved in the process of mentoring within my institution's partnership. There was a pragmatic intent to my project in that it would support the construction of a framework for mentoring which could be implemented across my institution's ITE programmes, thus ensuring its workability. The research would provoke discussion amongst those mentoring stakeholders thus encouraging reflective and reflexive practice for all participants. The ethical problems were dealt with openly in that they certainly existed in terms of the researcher's powerful position and within focus group discussions. Groundwater-Smith and Mockler (2007, cited by Mockler, 2014, p148) had argued that the most appropriate quality framework for research of this nature is a framework of ethics and. they proposed involved five overarching ethical guidelines. I ensured that my work adhered to these guidelines, outlining that in section 3.10 Ethical Considerations. My work ultimately would have the potential to empower future cohorts of students as it would proactively encourage them to take hold of the mentoring process and shape it from within, supporting their mentors in supporting them, this would encourage new practices and new actions. The research narrative certainly evoked mental images, memories and emotions related to the theme of mentoring. This was clear from the mentors' discussion about their own experiences of having been mentored when I was asking them about their own practice.

Having considered Heikkinen et al's, (2012, pp6-8) conceptualisation for quality within action research and having mapped the five principles of validation against my work I was secure in the knowledge that, although I had rejected the terms validity and reliability as inappropriate, I had demonstrated that my research was of quality.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Educational research is defined as 'Criticial enquiry aimed at informing educational judgements and decisions in order to improve educational action' (Bassey, 1999, p39).

Ethical issues in educational research represent a tension between the beneficent intent to investigate the nature of individual experience and a need to adhere to the ethical imperative of respect and the intent to do no harm (Northumbria University 2017). Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2011) suggested that ethical considerations underpin research practice from the outset and should influence the core design of intended investigations.

I was a researching professional, able to benefit from my position, as described by Sikes and Potts (2008, p177):

> inside researchers readily know the language of those being studied, along with its particular jargon and are more likely to empathise with those they study because of in-depth understanding of them, less likely to foster distrust and hostility among those they study, are often more willing to discuss private knowledge with those who are personally part of their world, are often more likely to understand the events under investigation and are less likely to be afflicted by outsiders' arrogance where researchers fail to understand what they observe. Inside researchers find that those they study are often more likely to volunteer information to them than they would to outsiders.

However, particular ethical considerations arose from being a researcher, on the inside, as articulated by Atkins and Wallace (2012, p50) being associated with 'role identity and boundary conflict, confidentiality, relationships, power relations and impartiality'.
The notion of my power and position was associated with my own roles as Deputy Programme Leader for the BA Early Primary Programme and Programme Leader PGCE Primary at different points in the course of my project and in this respect I acknowledged and adhered to Northumbria University's (2017) principles of good research practice to ensure the best interests of the participants throughout their involvement. As part of this process, a research proposal was submitted to the Northumbria University Research Ethics Sub-Committee, prior to the active engagement of participants. Procedures to protect their interests at all stages of the research were outlined and received approval (Research Ethics Number: RE13-03-12746). The Research Ethics and Governance Handbook (Northumbria University, 2017) stated that research should be driven by the ethical imperative of respect and the intent to do no harm. A crucial aspect of this was to ensure that the participants fully

understood the idea of voluntary informed consent and their right to withdraw without penalty.

My position was not an unusual one as much educational research, particularly that which is undertaken as part of postgraduate study, occurs inside the researcher's own institution and is conducted by a 'researching professional' rather than a 'professional researcher' (Wellington and Sikes, 2006, cited by Atkins, Wallace, 2012, p49). According to Mockler (2014, p148):

> Critical engagement with practice on the part of practitioners is a key tenet of high-quality action or practitioner research, and sound critical engagement with practice relies upon the enactment of ethical practice.

Subsequently I, and the community of practice I worked within, would need to be receptive to any arising 'unwelcome truths' (Kemmis, 2006). Groundwater-Smith and Mockler (2007, cited by Mockler, 2014, p148) argued that the most appropriate quality framework for practitioner research is a framework of ethics. The ethical framework they proposed involved five overarching ethical guidelines. These guidelines explicitly related to Oancea and Furlong's (2007) expressions of research excellence in practice-based research. I reflected upon how my research addressed each of these guidelines, in effect using the guidelines as a way of ensuring that my research was indeed ethical:

- The observation of ethical protocols and processes: cutting across each of Oancea and Furlong's three domains [epistemic, technical and phronetic domains], an adherence to principles of research ethics, including informed consent, a desire to establish trustworthiness in research, and a receptiveness to research findings are all examples of this observation in practice in the context of practitioner research.

Before recruiting participants, I considered the ethical protocols and processes required by my project and my role as a researching professional. As stated earlier, these were considered by University X's Research Ethics Sub-Committee. Procedures to protect participants, at all stages of the research, were outlined and received approval. There was also an acknowledgement at that point that the process may indeed result in the need to

consider ‘unwelcome truths’ (Kemmis, 2006) about our practices, findings would be made available to all participants.

- The pursuit of transparency in the processes it employs: Oancea and Furlong invoke transparency and explicitness within the epistemic domain, but this notion also speaks to the ‘auditability’ of the research and the plausibility it establishes within the community, taking heed of Lawrence Stenhouse’s observation that we should seek to publish to the ‘village’ as well as to the world (Stenhouse 1981, p17).

To ensure transparency, initial consent for the focus group discussion was sought through letters of invitation sent to the potential participants and was accompanied by information outlining all aspects of their involvement. The information pack clearly indicated their right to refuse consent or withdraw at any time without affecting the professional relationship between themselves and myself as the researcher. In the participant information sheet the purpose of the study and aims of the research were made clear, along with the particular issues surrounding confidentiality and anonymity associated with focus group discussions.

- A collaborative goal for the researcher-participants: dialogue and scope for transformation of school and classroom practices are enhanced by collaborative opportunities for teacher-participants, as is the capacity for practitioner research to operate as inquiry-based professional learning.

This guidleline was addressed informally with participants, during the preamble to the focus group discussions and also at the end of the mentoring discussions with students, before they decided whether or not they were happy for me to use their session notes. The goal of enhancing the mentoring process for all participants was made explicit to both students and to mentors.

- A transformative intent that leads to action: located primarily within Oancea and Furlong’s phronetic domain, a transformative intent for practitioner inquiry additionally relates to the kind and quality of contribution to knowledge made as well as framing aspects of the technical domain: responsible and ethical practitioner research undertaken within a school community is that which is able to be operationalised to the benefit of the whole community rather than to a select group, for example.

Constructing a conceptual framework for mentoring, arising from the implications of the data collected, was illustrative of a transformative intent. This would impact on future cohorts of

ITE students, partnership mentors, their institutions, their pupils and the quality of the subsequent mentoring experiences. In effect the resulting framework would underpin work operationalised for the benefit of University X's whole ITE community.

- The capacity to justify itself to its own community of practice: 'competitiveness' and value efficiency in the context of practitioner inquiry relate not only to the expenditure of any funding that may be forthcoming in ways that are generative for the school community as well as meeting the requirements of the funding body, but also to the way that the 'opportunity cost' of conducting practitioner inquiry is understood as such and employed for the benefit of the community as a whole.

The study would have the capacity to justify itself to the whole community once the framework and its resulting activities had been operationalised within it, contributing to the sustained health of the partnership.

In essence, these five overarching ethical guidelines provided broad direction as to how I could utilise ethics as a framework and acted as a mechanism for ensuring the quality of the study.

The next chapter presents the data gathered and an initial discussion of the findings.

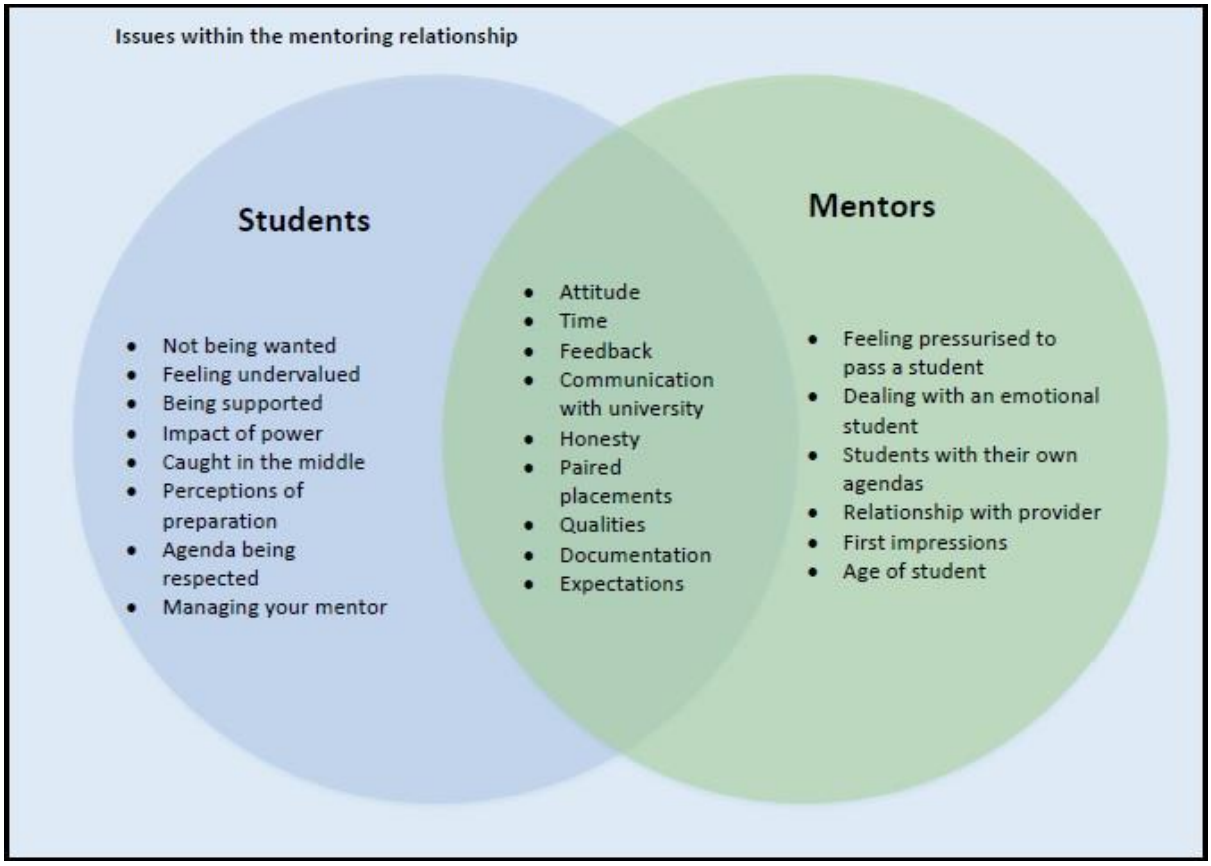
Chapter Four: Data Presentation & Part 1 Discussion of Findings

This chapter opens with an identification of the themes which emerged from the data and provides a rationale for the order in which they are presented and discussed. Each theme is then considered in turn and the chapter closes with mentor participants' suggestions for ways forward.

4.1 Emerging Themes

The understandings of what constitutes The Ideal Mentee and The Ideal Mentor were considered first. I felt it important that the discussion of the findings began with a consideration of the 'ideal' before moving towards a consideration of the issues arising from the lived experiences as that mirrored the process of mentoring, in that participants would always have their expectations, assumptions and hopes for how the mentoring experience would be, before it began in practice. 'Understandings of Support' was a specific theme to arise from the data and it actively foregrounded other emerging issues as it was a prime example of how multiple understandings of a commonly used term, inherent to the process of mentoring, could foster the development of other areas of tension. The examination of what support meant to both mentors, and mentees, was a useful bridge between the ideal and the experienced as that appeared to be central in a shift from expectation to reality. At this point, it was possible to begin pinpointing the issues that were the source of tension for mentors and mentees (see Figure 17)

Figure 17: Issues within the mentoring relationship



Once these issues were identified I explored each from the perspectives of the mentors and the mentees (see Appendix 15: Towards Drawing Conclusions) and grouped them within the over-arching theme of 'Identifying Tensions'. Several of the areas for tension were related to 'Communication' in some way and so this became the most significant sub-theme, the second sub-theme was 'Time'. The initial discussion of findings closes with participants' suggestions for ways forward.

In summary, these were the themes to emerge from the data which were explored and this is the order in which they were addressed:

- The Ideal Mentee
- The Ideal Mentor
- Misunderstandings of Support
- Identifying Tensions
    - Communication
    - Time
- Participants' Suggestions for ways Forward

In this way the chapter moves us towards the future and to a distinct discussion of findings chapter. Chapter Five: Part 2 Discussion of Findings develops the ideas raised in Chapter Four, foregrounding the proposed model and contextualising the conclusion.

Before considering the themes of The Ideal Mentee and The Ideal Mentor, overviews of the participants' responses, represented by the word clouds below (Figure 18, p136 and Figure 19, p136), aim to make the data immediately accessible. What I believed to be particularly interesting about each word cloud was that 'mentor' was the word used most frequently by students and 'student' was the word used most frequently by mentors. This suggested that both the mentors and the students generally reflected to a greater degree upon each other's behaviour and actions, rather than their own. They each clearly believed that the other had a vital role to play in the process. From the outset this suggested that a more reflexive stance would be useful in the development of mentoring relationships, where participants would take greater personal responsibility for positive outcomes.

Word frequency analysis of combined student response (BA & PGCE)

Figure 18: Word frequency analysis of combined student response (BA & PGCE)

Figure 19: Word frequency analysis of combined mentor response

Word frequency analysis of combined mentor response

4.2 The Ideal Mentee

According to the mentors in this study, the ideal mentee would be proactive, organised, professional, committed, open to feedback and demonstrate emotional strength. During the mentors' focus group discussions mentors identified specific desirable characteristics and attributes of a mentee which could be grouped under these broader headings:

- A proactive approach
- Preparedness and organisation
- Professionalism
- Commitment to the profession
- Openness to feedback
- Emotional Strength

Most of these attributes broadly mapped across to those presented by Hudson (2013), discussed earlier in The Ideal Mentee section of the study's literature review. These aspects were mentees having a proactive approach, a commitment to the profession, an openness to feedback and emotional strength. However, this study's mentors did not cite attributes around enthusiasm for teaching, being personable for relationship building, apart from the benefits of painting on a smile (SB, line 144) being raised, or being lifelong learners as fundamental. They did cite preparedness and organisation, along with professionalism as being what they wanted from their mentees. My interpretation of this was that the mentors were building their explicit lists around aspects they had noticed were missing from some of their experiences of mentoring so, for example, 'enthusiasm for teaching' may not have been listed as mentors may have had positive experiences of their mentees displaying this attribute whereas they may have had experiences of mentoring a number of ill prepared students so this arose as a desired attribute.

The specific actions and attitudes, which the mentors were looking for in their mentees from the very outset of their placements, were:

- initiative (SB, line 162; SA lines 160-164)
- 'genuine interest' in the children and in what is happening in school (SA, lines 165-166; SB lines 153-159)

- honesty about their own strengths and areas for development and a willingness to communicate that (SB, lines 120-121)
- an inquisitive approach (SB, line 130)
- proactivity (SB, lines 132-136)
- preparedness (SB, lines 137 and 141)
- and a smile (SB, line 145).

As Ward and Wells (2003, p42) noted, student teachers are 'guests in the classroom' which requires a certain level of understanding and appropriate etiquette.

4.2.1 A Proactive Approach

At SB the mentors discussed being impressed by a mentee who 'comes in with questions' (SB, line 129) and those who 'come in and they want to know things and ask you things rather than you having to deliver all the information to them' (SB, lines 131-132); a mentee can create a positive first impression by arriving with a pen and a notebook (SB, lines 140-143). The mentors liked mentees to not need too much direction (SB, line 159) but to use their initiative, which they felt is lacking (SB, line 161; SA, line 161); they wanted somebody to 'work' rather than 'stand' (SB, line 163). In wanting a mentee to 'work' rather than 'stand' mentors again confirmed that they wanted a mentee who used their initiative and wanted to be part of their team from the very outset. The mentors' desire for their mentees to be proactive therefore suggests that they would appreciate their mentees being confident. Mentors clearly wanted their mentees to use their initiative and to 'get in amongst it straightaway' (SA, line 167) whilst observing the social norms of their school (SB, line 113). A mentee therefore needs to be sufficiently confident to use their initiative but they need to be able to do this in such a way so as not to appear overly confident and give the impression that they 'think they know everything' (SB, line 63). To demonstrate an appropriate level of confidence, to use their initiative appropriately, a mentee would need to observe routines and rituals carefully from the very outset on a placement so that they could pre-empt what might be happening next. This would ensure that the mentee was helpful to the mentor and the children, whilst being mindful of operating within the accepted social framework of their mentor and the school. Finding the appropriate display of confidence could well be

challenging for a mentee, particularly if a mentor is not sufficiently open with them about what they would value and leaves the mentee to make their own assumptions about their expectations. Mentee PG2 reported that she struggled because she did not know what she had done to upset her mentor and consequently 'kept [her] head down and carried on' in order to deal with the situation, a response which could not only prevent the situation from improving but potentially exacerbate it.

4.2.2 Preparedness and Organisation

Mentors reported that they find it useful if mentees are familiar with their placement handbooks (SB, lines 131-136; SA, lines 355 and 412) and if they are proactive in helping mentors navigate that paperwork too (SB, line 152). Mentors felt that the mentees should be clear about their placement tasks from the outset (SB, lines 137-138) and communicate that to their mentors which does not appear to happen consistently; 'I know they come with their contents list but trying to get it out of them is like drawing teeth' (SA, lines 355-356).

The provider, in advance of a student teacher's placement, sent mentors placement documentation but it appeared clear from the mentors' discussions that it would be common for them not to engage with this until the student arrived. Mentees could be particularly helpful to their mentors by being conversant with the placement documentation and expectations themselves so that they could clearly communicate these to their mentors. Mentors found that students were not clear about placement expectations before they started. As all students would have had placement briefings prior to the start of each placement then this is an issue to be explored more fully. It may be that the placement briefings need to be reviewed for clarity. Those colleagues who are responsible for student briefings need to be aware that this is a common observation of mentors and we need to consider ways of making our expectations more clear and explicit to our students.

4.2.3 Professionalism

Some mentors felt that mentees need to understand that ‘the personal side’s got to go’ (SA, line 273) and not use this as an ‘excuse’ if, for example, they receive feedback that they do not like. They also felt that mentees need to understand the boundaries of expectations e.g. not to call their mentors out of hours (SA, line 291).

If a student enrols on an ITE programme directly from their own education, without having engaged in work of a professional nature, then the transition to a teacher’s complex professional persona must be particularly challenging for them to make. It may be that a student teacher could initially regard a teacher mentor in a similar way to how they regarded their own teachers at school, consequently being tempted to share personal issues as might have been appropriate in their previous experiences. As a mentor teacher clearly does not have the same duty of care to a student teacher as they have to a pupil in their class then it can be understood why this sharing of personal experience may be disquieting for a mentor. Students need to be supported in making the initial transition to student teacher, and ultimately teacher, from a relationship perhaps more akin to a pupil-teacher relationship to that of a student teacher-mentor teacher i.e. the mentee-mentor relationship.

The provider and their partnership schools should discuss what constitutes appropriate professional boundaries between their student teachers and their mentors and this then needs to be shared explicitly with the student teachers, before the mentoring process begins. Whilst it would be impossible to discuss appropriate professional responses to every eventuality, some of the more commonly arising tensions, surrounding appropriate boundaries, could be alleviated by establishing agreed protocols.

By using lines of communication appropriately, as an example of a professional boundary, the impact of not adhering to an accepted convention, for both mentors and mentees, can be considered. Appropriate lines of communication, and appropriate use of those lines, can be established and the particular boundaries relating to this maintained. If a student messages

a mentor out of hours (SA, line 250) then it constitutes that the mentor must have shared their personal contact details with the mentee in the first instance. It was confirmed explicitly by the study's student teachers (BA1, BA58, BA62, BA76, PG11, PG12, PG36) that mentors do share their personal contact details with mentees. BA58 said that their mentor 'provided me with their contact details' and others reported not only having access to their mentor's personal contact details but understood that they were able to use them freely. PG11 indicated that their mentor 'gave contact details to contact them whenever support was needed' and BA1 who reported that 'my mentor gave me both her email and her phone number to contact her about anything whenever I needed her', BA76 'spoke on a weekend' with their mentor and PG36's mentor was 'always available for contact'. Only one student teacher, who talked explicitly about this line of contact with their mentor, PG12, indicated any level of boundary suggesting that they were able to contact their mentor at the weekend 'if I was struggling' which indicates that this line of contact was only to be used out of hours in a particular situation. It may consequently be that being able to contact a mentor 'out of hours' has become an expectation for students as reflected by BA62 who suggested that a mentor should provide a mentee with their personal contact details and that their mentor was 'readily available at all times'. The study's mentors suggested that they do not appreciate being contacted out of office hours but it is clear that mentors do share their personal contact details with their mentees and that a number of mentees believe their mentors are happy to be contacted whenever the mentee feels the need for some advice. This is an example of an area of tension between the mentor and mentee but one which could be alleviated by the sharing of clear expectations between them. These expectations would need to be set not only between each mentee and each mentor but across the partnership. If the communication protocols are not standardised then some students will always feel disadvantaged, for instance, if one mentor is happy for a student to use their personal number over a weekend for advice and another student is mentored by somebody who has said that they will respond to any emailed queries sent by 6pm on a Friday then the student who has no access to the mentor's personal number will undoubtedly feel disadvantaged. As

already identified (Izadinia, 2016, p388), a shared understanding, between mentee and mentor, of what constitutes a professional mentoring relationship is essential. However, there needs to be a shared understanding beyond each individual pairing of mentor and mentee and there needs to be a unified, consistent approach in the maintenance of those associated professional boundaries across the partnership. This would ensure that one student would not feel disadvantaged by a peer's experience in a different placement school where there may be a different understanding of what constitutes appropriate professional boundaries. This would support both mentors and mentees by managing students' expectations and therefore alleviating a number of possible tensions which arise from the perceived crossing of such boundaries.

If a shared understanding of what constitutes appropriate boundaries in relation to how and when to communicate was made explicit to student teachers, and across the partnership, then effective time management could be embedded more easily. Given that 'high workload is one of the most commonly cited drivers for teachers leaving the profession and can be a disincentive for potential new teachers to join' (DfE, 2018) then it is evident that there is a need to reduce workload in ITE. It has been identified (DfE, 2018) that student teachers need to be supported by their ITE providers to 'establish good habits' and that ITE providers are well placed to 'encourage and foster culture change' to tackle workload. Furthermore, this wider shared understanding would naturally introduce a strategy for developing capacity for resilience. If time in the evenings and the weekends was 'protected', to allow mentors and mentees some time where they knew they were under no pressure to either check their emails or messages for work-related issues, this would be beneficial to those involved. If appropriate communication boundaries were established and maintained then it would follow that distinct deadlines for placement tasks such as planning, marking and data management would need to be agreed and consequently the embedding of effective time management and those 'good habits' in student teachers that 'support the progress of their pupils but are not overly burdensome' (DfE, 2018) would be developed.

4.2.4 Attitude

The mentors appreciated ‘honesty’ in their mentees (SB, line 120) in terms of them being happy to share what they feel good at but also to share what they feel they will need support with. Mentors did not like a mentee to arrive thinking that ‘they know everything’ (SB, lines 61-62, 67-71). They also discussed being taken aback at times by a mentee’s attitude and how they might speak to school staff (SB, line 112; SA lines 175-179).

Mentees need to be aware of ‘the line’ between appearing confident and over sure of themselves. Schools are inherently hierarchical structures and mentees need to not only be aware of school culture but of a school’s individual culture (Anderson and Shannon, 1988) so that they can be assimilated into that as smoothly as possible, it would possible for a mentee to make cultural gaffes and these may be difficult for a mentee to recover from, in terms of securing the support of those around them in a school.

4.2.5 Commitment to the Profession

Mentors wanted their mentees to be fully committed to the profession of teaching with Mentor M5 (SA line 168) describing it as a ‘vocation’. One mentor cited that he found mentoring particularly difficult when he was aware that a mentee had not yet decided whether they wanted to enter the profession when they completed the programme (SA, line 209), this left the mentor questioning why he was working so hard to support the mentee. As reported by Carlsson et al. (2019), far from all those completing initial teacher education programmes, in several countries, work as teachers for their entire careers:

> Reported attrition figures in the literature vary considerably, with an estimated 30–50% five year attrition rate in the US (Ingersoll 2003), the UK (Cooper and Alvarado 2006), Norway (Roness 2012), Australia (Gallant and Riley 2014) and Sweden (Swedish Government 2010)
>
> (Carlsson et al., 2019, p243)

Teacher supply and retention in England is certainly an issue with the recruitment of initial teacher trainees being below target since 2012 and a 'wastage rate' of full time equivalent qualified teachers of 9.8% in the 12 months to November 2018 (House of Commons, 2019) alongside increasing pupil numbers this means that the overall number of teachers is not keeping pace with demand. Currently 32.3% of the profession's newly qualified entrants in 2016 are not recorded as working in the state sector (House of Commons, 2019) which demonstrates that not only is it a challenge to recruit teachers but also to retain them. In 2019, the government published a marketing and recruitment guide to support providers, which has been regularly updated (DfE, 2020a), further underlining the government's recognition of the need to attract new entrants to the teaching profession. Although it is consequently clear that teacher recruitment and retention are recognised as challenges for our schools these mentors still clearly expect their mentees to be fully committed to the profession and find it challenging to mentor a mentee who is thinking about whether or not they have made the right career choice. A student may have embarked on a teacher education programme without having been in a school since they were a pupil themselves and they may have responded to the government's specific marketing (DfE, 2020b), which uses emotive language to engage potential applicants; 'every day you'll get the chance to inspire young people', 'use your skills to give something back', 'make a difference and inspire the next generation', emphasising the worthy altruistic nature of the profession which is potentially appealing to an applicant without recent working knowledge of the school context. Some applicants may consequently be relying on their own perceptions of what it is like to be a teacher, based on their own 'pupil view' of the role, coupled with the government's persuasive marketing. The 'Every Lesson Shapes a Life' film (Get Into Teaching, 2020) has attracted some particular online debate with the TES (2020) making reference to some of the tweets posted in response to it, for example:

> Do they show the bit where he is observed again for the third time that week or how he fires up the laptop at 9.30 when his own kids have gone to bed and misses out on his social life?

with another adding:

> He’s leaving at the same time as the kids and not taking marking with him?! Is this a parallel universe?

And then countered by tweets such as:

> I blooming love being a teacher! It's a stimulating and rewarding job and we get to make a difference in people's lives and in our own! I know it's tough and there are huge challenges, but we need to limit moaning and look for the positives!

At the very least these comments demonstrate that there is more to teaching than its portrayal in the government’s advertising campaign. Without having a rounded view of the role of the teacher, prior to application, then it stands to reason that the reality of the role will not match the expectations of some student teachers. At times during their ITE programme, it would therefore seem reasonable that a student may well consider whether teaching is the career for them and voice this with their mentor but as we can see this can impact upon how the mentor then feels about mentoring a mentee who is unsure. It is understandable that a mentor might feel as though they are wasting their time if a mentee is not fully committed to the idea of teaching, but, given the attrition rates mentioned earlier, it would also appear to be common for teachers to question their career choice. This is a reality which needs to be acknowledged and handled without it negatively impacting upon the mentoring relationship as this could only reinforce any feelings in a student teacher that they had made the wrong choice of career.

Mentors expected mentees to be not only committed to the profession but also committed to the children. Mentors all felt that mentees ought to be interested in the children and what is happening in their schools, this was also highlighted by Hudson (2013). This study’s mentors felt that, all too often, their mentees were more interested in their own agendas e.g. their own tasks which needed to be completed for the university (SB, line 152, SA lines 166-169, 195-203 & 215). Conversely some of the study’s student teachers (BA49, BA51, PG13,

PG43, PG45, PG47, PG71, PG72) felt that their work was not respected by their mentors with BA49 giving a specific illustration which s/he found unsettling:

> [the mentor] Either not giving time to allow activities to be carried out or switching groups or changing who I had planned for. Some teachers take advantage of the work (i.e. when doing BR@P [Boosting Reading @ Primary, an intervention programme] I spent most days just reading with everyone in the class)

Students can be given a variety of tasks to complete on placement, by the provider. The placement tasks would be designed to ensure that students are making effective use of their time on placement, that they find out what they need to know to be able to teach effectively and that they engage in reflection to make progress, with a central aim being that the children they teach make progress. It seems from the mentors' discussions (SB, lines 152-158; SA, lines 194-202) that students view these as the 'important' things to attend to, using a clinical approach to their placements, 'ticking off' tasks to evidence competence and subsequently successful completion of the programme. University colleagues, responsible for setting placement tasks, need to be aware of how mentors often feel about how the students approach placement tasks and this needs to be shared in placement briefings so that students are aware of how to approach the completion of these tasks when in school. Mentors felt that if students were interested in what was happening with their children in their school, rather than in the completion of their tasks, then 'what they'd be doing for the children would be right' (SA, lines 199-202). It would appear that university colleagues should ensure that they are co-ordinated in their setting of tasks so that any overlapping or perhaps unnecessary tasks are removed, it would be useful to involve colleagues from the wider partnership to be involved in the setting of any placement tasks too so that they were able to contribute to the process and have some ownership of those tasks so that they understood the value of them and would consequently respect the need for a student, in their remit, to complete them.

4.2.6 Openness to Feedback

Mentors felt that mentees need to be open to taking suggestions on board (SB, lines 81-83), again a desirable attribute already identified in mentoring literature (Hudson, 2013). Mentors also reported that they want mentees who will take feedback positively (SB, lines 104-113) and who subsequently act on the advice given by them (SA, line 258). Some mentees did explicitly acknowledge finding it challenging to receive feedback that they did not necessarily agree with (BA48; BA54; BA59) but none of them reported ignoring that feedback, on the contrary, they felt that they worked to address it: 'I listened to the feedback and put it into practice to make sure that I made the most of the support' (BA48); '[I] Accepted the feedback and took guidance on board' (BA54) and 'I took any feedback/targets positively and used these to plan and better my teaching. This showed I was appreciating the feedback' (BA59). If these were the responses from those particular students who cited receiving feedback that they did not necessarily agree with then it would seem reasonable to assume that mentees' responses to feedback which they felt was reflective of their practice would be at least similarly positive. This demonstrated a particular area of potential tension between mentors and mentees in that mentors felt that mentees were often not sufficiently receptive or responsive to their feedback, but mentees felt that they were responding appropriately.

4.2.7 Emotional strength

Mentors (SA) discussed the need for a mentee to have a secure self-esteem and confidence, with Mentor M1 (SA, lines 203-206) giving a particular example:

> I've had someone whose confidence and self-esteem hasn't been there, subject knowledge and everything like that, like the layout of the lesson has been there and the progression that they've wanted to make for the children but that self-esteem and confidence has been so low that it's been hard to make the other things positive, even though it's all there

This indicated that they believed that if a student teacher does not have a healthy self-esteem and, or, confidence then it does not matter if they have the other necessary skills and attributes as they would be unable to implement them effectively, being too inhibited by their evaluation of their own worth and subsequent state of being. However, it needs to be noted at this point that we do not know exactly what Mentor M1 understands, and therefore means, by the terms 'self-esteem' and 'confidence' given that they are constructs in social psychology (Smith and Mackie, 2007) but also terms used widely in everyday life. Consequently, we do not have a potentially shared understanding; this is an area therefore which would be worthy of further research. Teaching would not seem to a natural career choice for a person who was lacking in self-confidence but it is apparent from the mentors' discussion that there are student teachers who they perceive as lacking in self-esteem and confidence therefore we need to examine how we support those students, given that they may fundamentally affect a student teacher's ability to succeed.

Mentors also discussed the importance of a mentee making a good first impression, and how they might do this, which is worthy of note as this is something which could be stressed to students before they embarked upon a placement. This would be a focussed, straightforward aspect to achieve and would set the relationship off on the best footing.

4.2.8 First Impressions

Although the importance of 'first impressions' was not highlighted in the mentoring literature reviewed it was raised by both of the mentor focus groups. The mentors in this study did have high expectations of their mentees from the outset, and the provider, as articulated by M4 (SA lines 152-154):

> Trust… you're just giving them your class really and you're trusting that the university have sent you someone reliable, sensible, worthy of your class and then you're handing them over aren't you, with the support in place?

The calibre of a mentee was clearly important to the study's mentors as them feeling nervous before they met their mentees was discussed in one of the focus group discussions

(SB, lines 147-151). Mentors were aware that they make first impressions of their mentees and there was some discussion around being careful not to do this (SA, lines 417-421) with a recognition that a mentee can also be feeling nervous at this point and ‘come out with things, say things’ (SA line 417) that perhaps do not reflect them accurately. Mentees were also aware that their mentors made first impressions of them with BA86 reporting that they were challenged by the experience that mentors‘ Make a first judgement very fast of you without giving you a chance’.

Mentees can be proactive in creating a positive first impression by being prepared and proactive in making contact (SB, lines 293-294), for instance. A positive first impression would reassure a mentor, who may also be feeling nervous (SB, line 147), that the signs are good for a positive placement. Although the mentors were aware that first impressions were not always accurate (SA, lines 416-420), they acknowledged that they do make them and so it would clearly be in a mentee’s best interests to ensure that they are good.

As we move to the next theme it would be pertinent to note that, to give the reader an initial overview of those key themes which were informed significantly by mentee data, the analysis of each opens with a concept map. These aim to synthesise and illustrate mentee responses, given the expansive nature of that data. The theme of what constitutes The Ideal Mentor is such a theme.

4.3 The Ideal Mentor

Figure 20: Attributes of The Ideal Mentor, identified by mentees

Actions related to feedback, support, guidance and advice featured significantly in the mentees' responses to identify 'the three most useful things a mentor does', as seen above. They also featured in the mentors' responses which was in line with mentoring literature around the role of the mentor and a mentee's expectations of a mentor (see 2.2 The Role of the Mentor, p35 and 2.3 Initial Expectations of the Mentoring Experience, p37). The following sunburst diagrams (Figure 21, p151 and Figure 22, p152) indicated how significant these terms were to both mentors and mentees and allowed a comparison to be drawn in Figure 23: A comparison of mentors' and mentees' most frequently used words, p153.

Figure 21: Sunburst diagram of 25 most frequently used words by mentors

Figure 22: Sunburst diagram of 25 most frequently used words by mentees

Figure 23: A comparison of mentors' and mentees' most frequently used words

A comparison of the most frequently (n=25) used words					
Mentees' most frequently used words	Ranked	Ranked with Mentors	Mentors' most frequently used words	Ranked	Ranked with Mentees
Mentor	1st	2nd	Students	1st	-
Feedback	2nd	17th	Mentor	2nd	1st
Support	3rd	5th	Teacher	3rd	9th
Teaching	4th	15th	Placement	4th	5th
Placement	5th	4th	Support	5th	3rd
Advice	12th	23rd			
Guidance	23rd	-			

Notably 'feedback' was referred to much more frequently by mentees than mentors which indicated how important students felt it was and perhaps accounts for how strong their emotional responses were, to episodes of feedback. 'Feedback' will be considered further, later in the chapter. I also compared the use of 'advice' and 'guidance' as these were highlighted by the Ideal Mentor word cloud, illustrating specifically what mentees were looking for, from their mentors, in addition to 'feedback' and 'support'. 'Advice' was also one of the mentors' frequently used words, although towards the bottom of their list, but 'guidance' did not feature. Clearly, 'feedback', 'advice' and 'guidance' were more highly prized by the mentees. At the very least, this demonstrates a mismatch in what participants felt were the significant aspects of mentoring which immediately underlined a difference in expectations around the role of the mentor. 'Support', however, was cited by both mentors and mentees and its ranking was much closer, it was the 3rd most frequently used word by mentees and the 5th most frequently used word by mentors.

4.4 Understandings of Support

The potential for misunderstandings due to initial perceptions of the mentor's role, and the language used around mentoring, a closer examination of one particular term used within the mentoring process will illustrate how this can contribute to a breaking down in relations between mentors and mentees. The fact that both mentors and mentees referred to 'support'

so often was not as reassuring as it appeared, in terms of participants having shared expectations of the role. On studying participants' wider responses it became clear that *understandings* of these often-used terms were not necessarily shared. Manning and Hobson (2017, p1) found that there was evidence of a 'distinct discrepancy between the perceptions of mentors and mentees regarding the nature of the mentoring experience'.

When asked to identify 'the three most useful things a mentor does' a significant proportion of students (58%) stated that 'support' was something they would expect from their mentor. 'Support' also featured in the mentors' focus group discussions with the first contributor (M3, SA line 132) in one discussion citing 'support' as a fundamental aspect of their role and the next contributor saying 'Shall we just all say support? Support, support, support [with general agreement from around the table]'. 'Support' might be quite an obvious thing to expect from a mentor (Izadinia, 2016) but the notion of support is evidently complex as it became clear in the data that it could mean quite different things to each participant, whether a mentor or a mentee, as it was cited in varying contexts. One person's 'support' was another person's 'spoon-feeding'. As we have seen, the literature makes clear the expectation of support from the mentor (Malderez, 2001; Hobson et al., 2009) but it again does not make explicit what type of support is being talked about and so this would be open to interpretation by an individual. The potential interpretations could be quite different with each interpretation influencing a different perception of what it would mean to support or be supported.

4.4.1 Perceptions of support

4.4.1.1 Emotional Support

PG5 suggested that a mentor should 'support you in your ideas' which is interesting as this suggested that this student was looking for a mentor to stand by them, giving reassurance and that potentially whatever they think should be supported by the mentor. This was underlined by the other things PG5 thought a mentor should do; 'Help calms your nerves' and 'Be a friend' which clearly implied that this particular student was seeking significant

emotional support from their mentor. This resonates with the work of Mackie (2017) where the importance of the personal dimension of mentoring was highlighted. Other students were also explicit in their expectation of this type of support, for example, PG49, PG62, PG63, PG71 and PG94 all cited 'emotional support' as one of the most useful things a mentor could offer a student which supported the idea that the presence of a close emotional connection between mentor and mentee leads to better outcomes, including feelings of self-worth (Izadinia, 2016). The National Standards for mentors make note of the need to establish trusting relationships and empathise with the challenges a trainee faces (DfE, 2016, p11) and so it would be reasonable to think that mentees might expect this from their mentors as they embarked on a placement. The mentors interviewed did identify emotional support as potentially being part of a mentor's role but implicitly rather than explicitly, for instance, one mentor (M10, SB line 8), when articulating why they would identify Mr Miyagi as an effective mentor said 'he's very patient and forgiving' which indicated that they might expect a mentee to make mistakes and that they would respond in a kindly way which in turn indicated a stance which supported a student emotionally. Later in the focus group this mentor went on to talk about the negative impact that a particular mentor had had on her whilst she was training (M10, SB lines 39-40) 'my final one was really bad to the point where I didn't even apply for any jobs, by the time I'd finished I literally had no confidence' which makes clear how important it is to be supported emotionally as the impact of leaving a placement with 'no confidence' prevented this teacher from applying for a teaching post; there is a need for a mentor to support the person within the process in addition to providing professional support to improve practice (Yeomans & Sampson, 1994). However, mentors, in this study, felt that emotional support was not something that everyone needed but that it was something given if things did not go to plan. Interestingly, when discussed explicitly, mentors talked about the giving of emotional support as being a 'challenge' of the process rather than something to be expected; M8 (SB lines 81-82):

> When you're trying to suggest something… we had one student, she took it very personally like you were criticising *her* and it wasn't, it

> was about trying to see past that, this went wrong but actually if you did it this way it might be better so it was more about her attitude wasn't it?

A need for emotional support was perhaps seen as a negative aspect of a particular mentee as it was seen here as an issue with the mentee's 'attitude'. This mentor distanced 'the performance' from 'the student' and in turn expected the student to be able to distance their own self from their performance which may be challenging and it might seem understandable that the student felt that the feedback was personal (Timostsuk & Ugaste, 2010). The giving of emotional support was discussed explicitly by others, within the remit of the challenges associated with being a mentor, and M1 (SA lines 271-275) started that conversation with;

> I think sometimes when it gets like emotional as well and when they bring in personal things from home because we all know as teachers and friends that things are happening at home and you can deal with it but as soon as you come in to work, or in the classroom, that personal side's got to go and I think when you're with a student and you're giving them bad feedback or etc and then they bring in something personal you're like er oh no or they start crying and you're like oh crap

Not all mentors consistently distinguished between emotional and practical support, (M1 SA, line 12) identified that Mr Miyagi has 'got a lot of skill as well hasn't he? He knows a lot… so you'd be confident in having him as your mentor' which demonstrated an understanding of a distinct relationship between the practical and emotional aspects of the role, one followed the other potentially in that a mentee would feel confident if the mentor was experienced and skilled (Garvey et al., 2018).

Mentors did implicitly acknowledge that emotions needed to be dealt with as it was apparent that mentors were well aware of having to 'act ok' in the classroom e.g. M13 (SB lines 144-146) said 'Even if you're nervous you can do that can't you, even if you're nervous you can paint that smile on, you have to' when referring to dealing with personal issues themselves and they appeared to feel that mentees need to do this too. This links with the work of Gu and Day (2013) in terms of the perception of resilience being a learnt capacity to maintain an emotional equilibrium in challenging and unpredictable circumstances. Given that the

students involved in the study were in this position for the first time, being mentored in a school context, it would have been challenging for them to 'act ok' when they were not necessarily feeling ok. They may not have been able to prepare for this because they were not necessarily aware that the ability to conceal their emotions was something they would be expected to do. However, the mentors in the study had all mentored several students and so they would have been reflecting upon their experiences of mentees both new to the experience and those who were more experienced in the process. As university educators we have a responsibility to share with students the variety of lived experiences of being mentored rather than limiting the preparation for their initial placements to largely superficial practicalities and waiting until issues arise before dealing with them. These reoccurring themes must be shared with students so that they know what it is that they need to prepare for.

The mentors in this study did acknowledge that the need was there, at times, for the giving of emotional support but that it was something which made their job more problematic. The giving of emotional support was also seen as time consuming and consequently something which they would prefer to avoid. This was underlined by M6's comment '[I] invested an awful lot of time… basically it was time… a lot of extra time' (SA lines 245-249). However, one mentor (M7 SA, lines 10-11) selected Mr Miyagi as a role model for mentors 'because he's got patience and they do it alongside each other, rather than just being told what to do they're doing it together' which does indicate an appreciation of the need to support the person throughout the process. By identifying 'patience' as a requisite quality both M7 and M10 demonstrated an understanding that being a mentor is not straightforward, they must expect setbacks. Aspects of mentoring can be frustrating but by acknowledging the need for patience the mentors made it clear that setbacks were something to be expected, rather than something which were a failing in an individual mentee. It needs to be made explicit to students that their call for emotional support may not be answered readily by their mentor, perhaps they need to seek pastoral support elsewhere and think about their mechanisms for

this before embarking on placement. Supporting pastorally is a role which a university guidance tutor could fulfil, as they are at a distance and removed from the mentee/mentor relationship. The mentee may feel more able to be vulnerable with their guidance tutor as this would not be something which might be viewed as a 'black mark' (Hobson & McIntyre, 2013) or as a sign that they were not coping with the demands of placement but something which may be expected as 'normal'. This also relates to those mentoring models (Hobson et al., 2016) which valued external support, in the form of mentoring and coaching.

4.4.1.2 Practical Support

Support was also seen in the data as something more practical in nature for some participants. BA27 thought a mentor should 'Support you throughout the placement experience', their elaboration indicated that they were not thinking of emotional support. They went on to explain what they understood by support: 'Provide advice and recommendations to improve teaching/approaches to learning' and 'Ensure targets are being met and review weekly in order to meet standards'. This stressed that this student's understanding of what it meant to be supported did not encompass support of an emotional nature. Another student, BA28 said; 'On my BA2 final placement my mentor was extremely supportive. She would give me useful feedback on assessed lessons. Also, she would include me in all of the staff meetings'. This indicated a student who appreciated their mentor being supportive by not only passing on their knowledge but by enabling the student to be part of the school community. Appreciating being 'included' in the staff meeting potentially indicated a student who felt welcomed which is emotional support. However, there would also be evidence of practical support here as the student would have been party to the information shared with the staff. As being accepted by, and integrated into, a specific community is part of Malderez's (2001, p57) mentoring definition and Hudson (2005, p31) stated that the mentor's first task was to help the preservice teacher to understand practices and the culture of a school then it is crucial that mentors include their mentees in wider

school activity, such as staff meetings, to ensure that they are integrated and informed.

Mentors cited the practical aspects of support too which they felt to be important:

> feeding little chunks of information and then hopefully it'll build up to become the full package at the end
> (M5 SA line 42-43)

> you feel like you've got things that you can show them – little tricks that they can use, when you see them struggling away, day after day, you sometimes think well… actually I could help you here a little bit with this
> (M3 SA lines 29-31)

> Observe and feedback on their lessons
> (M9 SB line 166)

> modelling as well - you doing it and them actually getting to watch, that modelling of lessons even sharing of behaviour management strategies because if you don't get that right you can't really teach, that kind of sharing of things and showing of things
> (SB M13, lines 177-179)

Contributions were much more limited with regard to aspects explicitly related to emotional support being important: M10 (SB line 172) mentioned 'developing their confidence' being an important aspect of mentoring and M2 (SA line 144) said she felt it was vital to be able to 'Rescue' a mentee. M5 (SA line 147) said 'I also think it's important to be approachable to the students as well'.

4.4.1.3 What Constitutes Support?

Another example of differing perceptions of 'support' was not in the definition of the term but in what constitutes support; M3 (SB line 14) said; 'You see I'd pick Dumbledore for the same reason [skilled and knowledgeable] but because he's also not afraid to let you drown a little bit but you can learn, because he let Harry go a little bit before he pulled him back in' which was then added to by another (M2 SA, line 18) in the group who said; 'A good mentor lets you take risks but is there on the side-line'. These mentors demonstrated that they valued the need for mentees to take risks. They felt they needed to allow a mentee some freedom

to find their limits in terms of what they could do independently but acknowledged that this must be observed so that they are 'pulled in' quickly if necessary. The inference was that if a student was allowed to 'drown a lot' then the experience would not be a positive one. Some mentees appreciated the freedom to take risks (BA59; PG37; PG55), they viewed this as a reflection of how much their mentor trusted them. However, some thought of this as being abandoned (BA80; PG58; PG94), feeling that a mentor had a student teacher to allow them some 'free time' leading to a mentee feeling like they were 'going it alone', 'making it up as they go along'. If this is an intentional strategy a mentor takes then it needs to be articulated clearly to the mentee from the outset. The mentee would not then need to make assumptions about why their mentors were stepping back from them. Some mentees also recognised the need for a balance (BA29). Mentors did acknowledge that some mentors were 'mentoring for the wrong reasons' M13 (SB lines 26-30) remembered her mentors:

> a couple of the ones I had didn't really want a student it was the idea of eventually having someone in the classroom and you could go and do your own thing… that was quite appealing… you definitely get a sense, when you get a mentor like that it's not about mentoring it's about using you for a different reason… and, having experienced that, I wouldn't want that for somebody that was coming into my classroom.

Mentor M12 (SB lines 93-97) expanded on the discussion surrounding 'letting students go':

> It's a very difficult balance though because at the end of the day you're still ultimately responsible for the children in the class and you can't *afford* to allow it to go too far, it's a tricky thing to do, to let someone run with something that you know is perhaps not going to work [general agreement] you've got to nip it in the bud really quite quickly and that's the challenging thing I think – it's not just how you address it with the trainee, it's how long you allow it to happen

This underlined the fact that mentors are not there for the sole purpose of mentoring but have a number of other pressing responsibilities, in particular, maintaining responsibility for the progress of the children in that class (DfE, 2011). Within schools' performative cultures, which Ball (2003; 2017) suggested have the potential to create a culture of terror, then it is understandable that a mentor needs to be able to step in if they feel that a student's performance is jeopardising any aspect of a child's progress. Given a mentor's time

constraints, their capacity to provide emotional support at times like this must again be compromised as their focus would still have to remain on the children's progress, rather than on the mentee's progress or wellbeing.

In conclusion, mentors and mentees both stressed the need for practical support. Mentees articulated explicitly the need for emotional support. Mentors recognised that emotional support was something they *may* need to give but this was something they found challenging and time consuming. Mentors' responses indicated that they were more reluctant to give emotional support and that they felt students just needed 'to get on' with feeling insecure. In part, this may have been linked to the mentors' feeling that students were too introspective, too focussed on their own needs rather than on the needs of the children. This idea is addressed in the section 4.5.1.6 Students' Agendas (p183), later in the chapter. The students' introspection is perhaps inevitable, given the investment they will have made in their teacher training programme and because of this their expectation of what they will receive in return would naturally be high. Mentors' central focus is on the progress of their children (DfE, 2011) whereas the students' central focus may be on their own personal progress. In effect mentees may feel that they are competing for their mentors' attention. It may well be that given the pressures and time constraints faced by mentors and with their ultimate focus being on the progress of their children that they may not be best placed to offer emotional support. However, emotional support is clearly needed by students generally, rather than in exceptional cases, and so mechanisms for providing that support need to be explored further by the university. The implications of a student not feeling emotionally supported are manifold, this may potentially lead to a student experiencing stress and anxiety, needing to seek help from their GP and ultimately not being able to complete their placement successfully. At this point, a student may choose to interrupt study and sometimes students do not return to the programme but choose to withdraw instead. In order to improve and maintain retention rates, improve outcomes for students within ITT

programmes, and therefore the progress of the children they are teaching, we need to ensure that we are listening to students about the type of support they know they need, be aware of the support which mentors are able to give and then reconcile the differences.

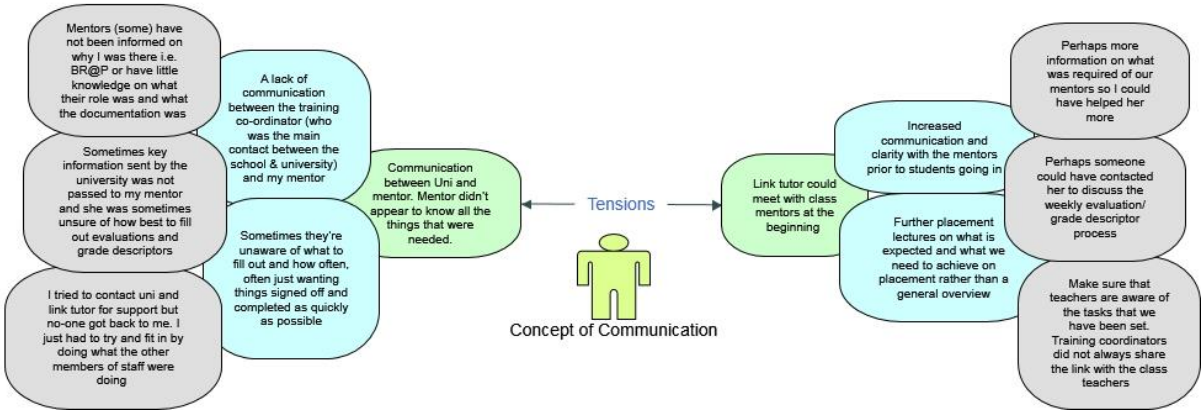
4.5 Pinpointing the Tensions

At this juncture I was reminded of Hudson and Hudson's (2018, p19) stance, referred to in the study's introduction, which provided the rationale for actively looking for the areas of tension:

> Attempting to pinpoint where tensions occur in mentoring relationships may assist to more effectively target those areas prior to commencing professional experiences.

4.5.1 Communication

Figure 24: Communication Issues, identified by students



The following themes, to be examined in this order, emerged from the data and were all linked, in one way or another, to issues of communication:

- Communication of Placement Expectations
- Reactive Communication
- Trust Between schools and providers
- Caught in the Middle and Feelings of Betrayal
- Students' Agendas

4.5.1.1 Communication of Placement Expectations

Issues around the theme of communication of placement expectations were discussed by mentors and were also highlighted by students, 21 of whom cited specific examples of how a

lack of communication between their placement schools and the university resulted in significant challenges for them throughout their placements (BA18, BA36, BA38, BA46, BA49, BA55, BA63, BA65, BA68, BA69, BA70, BA83, BA89, PG2, PG19, PG44, PG45, PG61, PG69, PG82, PG93).

Several issues surrounding communication of placement expectations were prevalent at the beginnings of placements. Mentees expected that mentors would have accessed placement documentation prior to the placement but found that this was often not the case. However, the mentors in this study expected incoming students to be knowledgeable about placement expectations and associated paperwork. They stated that they would like students to be forthcoming in bringing that to their attention to help them navigate the process but they said that students did not do this. Some mentees talked about feeling uncomfortable with sharing expectations with their mentors because they felt that their mentors were pressed for time. The result of this, for the mentees, was that they felt mentors were not consistently aware of the individual nature of their placement and thus, why they were there. In turn, the study's mentees felt undervalued and 'not wanted', also resonating with Hobson's (2009) findings where beginner teachers reported feeling 'at the bottom of the pecking order'. Mentors discussed wanting more placement information but according to the mentees, they did not access the information already given. This would be evidence that from the first day of a placement there would be scope for the beginnings of tension between mentor and mentee.

During placement there was a continuation of the challenges, regarding documentation and different challenges also arose.

According to mentees, mentors felt uncomfortable working on completion of documentation alongside a mentee. This perhaps related to mentors finding it difficult to give challenging feedback see 4.5.1.4 Delivery and Receipt of Challenging Feedback (p173) to a mentee. It could also be related to the considerable time pressures associated with being a teacher and a mentor. This possibility was recognised explicitly by BA63 who responded to the question 'What challenges have you encountered during the mentoring process?' with 'the lack of

time a mentor has due to their own workload. Sometimes they're unaware of what to fill out and how often, often just wanting things signed off and completed as quickly as possible.' BA83's response suggested an additional reason, to that of time, 'My mentor seemed unsure as to how to complete my grade descriptor at first and felt more comfortable in doing it at home, as she had very little time to do so at school'. This response suggested that BA83's mentor perhaps felt exposed by not understanding the placement's requirements and so wanted to look at the documentation away from the student. However, as discussed earlier, if mentors exposed their vulnerabilities this would go some way to redressing the power imbalance and make for a more trusting relationship (Stanulis and Russell, 2000, p78). BA83 did go onto acknowledge that their mentor had little time available to them in the school day. Consequently, the teacher may not have withdrawn to look at the documentation because she was embarrassed to be seen not understanding. She may have kept it to one side because it might not have been an effective use of her time to be attending to paperwork during the school day. Given that the school was in operation at that point then there may have been other tasks that were better completed than completion of paperwork which could be attended to beyond those hours. We know that mentors' work is complex, they are subject to competing demands and these define their actions (Valencia, Martin, Place & Grossman, 2009). BA83 elaborated further upon this scenario and reported encountering difficulties with being proactive, 'I tried to ensure that our weekly meetings left enough time for my mentor to fill out my grade descriptor and weekly evaluative sheet with me but she felt uncomfortable perhaps? Or just wanted to get home earlier?'.

As discussed within 4.2 The Ideal Mentee (p137) section It was evident that the mentors in this study would have liked to see students who were familiar with the placement documentation:

> M13 …but if someone just comes in knowing exactly what they need to know to start the placement, who knows what their first task needs to be and is very clear on all of that, being very clear on all of that is helpful

> M11 If they've looked through their handbook, which has been given to them
>
> M9 To navigate some of that paperwork as teachers is difficult
>
> M11 But they've had meetings at university and they should be looking at it and they, as students, should be going through that paperwork
>
> (SB lines 133-139)

Supporting the idea that mentors want students to take responsibility for their own learning, (Hudson, 2013), the study's mentors would have appreciated students, in addition to being familiar with their placement documentation, to take greater responsibility for sharing that placement documentation and a greater degree of ownership of it:

> M4 one thing I'm not as good at with them is their file, policies and all the information that they need - I know they come with their contents list but trying to get it out of them is like drawing teeth so just to have that so we know what's expected, if they're a good teacher they can't be a good teacher without a good file
> (SA lines 354-357)

This mentor was relying on their students to provide them with the expectations for placement and found it frustrating when they did not have a forthcoming or proactive student who shared this with them. However, all schools were sent a link to the documentation prior to the start of a placement and so this mentor should have been able to access this without waiting for the student to arrive. Documentation was sent electronically to schools but this discussion indicated that placement documentation did not consistently reach the mentors, an issue which was also identified by the students. Student participants stated that they worked to make their mentors aware of expectations, for instance, BA36 'Tried to inform them with the best of my knowledge on what the documentation required them to do', BA63 described 'Telling them what sheets to fill out and giving them examples from Blackboard' and PG69 'Showed her the new handbook'. Interestingly, none of these strategies would 'engage' a mentor given the use of the verbs 'inform', 'show' and 'tell' by the students to describe what they did so it appears that students were happy to be conduits for the information but perhaps not to use the documentation alongside a mentor.

It is clear that the student participants knew that their mentors were often unaware of placement expectations. BA36 reflected that ‘Mentors (some) have not been informed on why I was there i.e. BR@P or have little knowledge on what their role was and what the documentation was’ and PG2 reported there was ‘confusion over reports and tasks necessary to complete’.

Some students acknowledged that it was because the mentor had not accessed the communication ‘Sometimes key information sent by the university was not passed to my mentor’ (BA68). Others blamed university for this break in communication with BA18 stating that ‘it doesn’t sound to me when I go on placement that the schools have had much input from the uni prior to us arriving’. This made clear a perception that schools had not had a useful level of communication from the university prior to the beginning of their placement. This was also a perception confirmed by BA38, which had been cemented by his/her mentor: ‘[school based] mentor said guidance from the university would have been beneficial’. These students were working on the assumption that no guidance had been forthcoming from the university where in reality this guidance was available to the school but must not have been accessed by their mentor.

Schools, hosting these students’ placements, were sent a link to information prior to the students’ arrival but it was apparent that this information was not consistently accessed by mentors. It could have been, for example, that it was not clear to administrative staff, receiving the emailed documentation, which member of staff was responsible for mentoring student teachers and so who to pass it on to; underlining the point that the mentoring of students was not a priority for a school. This would also reinforce students’ perceptions that they were low on a school’s list of priorities (Hobson, 2009). If mentoring students was a priority for a school, then school administrators would know who to forward to documentation to. Students were made aware in placement briefings that all documentation was sent out to schools prior to their arrival and consequently they would assume that their mentor was

aware of placement expectations, potentially explaining why they would not think it necessary to be forthcoming with this themselves.

One student (BA68) went further and pinpointed a lack of communication 'between the training co-ordinator (who was the main contact between the school and university) and my mentor' as the breakdown. There need to be clear lines of communication within a school for placement documentation to reach the appropriate person. Establishing lines of communication in a school is beyond the remit of the provider. Consequently, the provider needs to re-think how they ensure that the documentation is received by the mentors as student participants indicated that it is not received when in reality it must often rest in a school's inbox or with a school's ITE co-ordinator.

4.5.1.2 Reactive Communication

Both the mentors and the mentees in the study talked about the times when they contacted link tutors. Mentors discussed contacting link tutors when there was a problem. Mentees tended not to contact link tutors when there was a problem, initially, the reasoning behind that was not clear. However, as mentees reported that link tutors' responses were not consistently useful to them then this could have been one reason why they were not routinely contacted.

An example of a link tutor being contacted by a mentor, when there was a problem, was outlined by Mentor M13:

> Well, I had a student who sounds similar to yours ****, I mean he was really struggling and I mean he was trying hard but he hadn't really *grasped* how much work went into being a teacher I think and we had to have that difficult conversation but actually the university mentor came in and did that with me, with him, and that was really helpful, rather than have that conversation with him on my own, I'd kind of started the conversation with him – just in feedback and things like that but it wasn't until we sat with the university mentor, when there were two of us, that I had someone helping me to sort of say 'are you sure this is what you want to do?' because it had got to that point where we didn't know whether he was really cut out to be a teacher, it needed to be as black and white and make him go away and think

> about it , I didn't find that easy to do so having someone else from the university to do it with me was much better, and actually, he went on to do an additional placement, in between two placements I think, in between but I don't know what happened after that but having that backup and support so it's not left to you when you're in that situation is *really* important.
>
> (SB lines 246-258)

Apart from highlighting how difficult it was for this mentor to deliver this challenging message, resonating with the findings related to the delivery of challenging feedback, considered later in the chapter, this illustrated how important it was for this mentor to feel supported by university staff. This was crucial for them so that they did not feel isolated, and wholly responsible, in the undertaking of the more uncomfortable aspects of mentoring.

However, M13 went on to raise a specific issue with contacting a link tutor when there was a problem:

> M13 Because sometimes it feels like universities don't *want* to have failing students and we don't want to have failing students but sometimes there's that feeling of 'are they going to let me say this person isn't really cut out for it' or will that not go down very well, I've always found them to be very supportive… but I know it's a worry for universities to have students who aren't going to make it, no university ever wants one of their students as a failing student on their numbers, it's as it is anywhere
>
> (SB lines 261-266)

The mentor discussed feeling potentially pressurised into passing a student when they did not feel able to. The reference to the pressure on retention makes implicit links with Ball's (2003) 'terrors of performativity' and stating 'it's as it is anywhere' implied that this mentor knew how it was to work within such a performative culture. When this mentor said 'are they going to *let* me say this person isn't really cut out for it' they indicated that they were not regarding their relationship with the university as a true partnership as it is clear that they felt the university held the power in this scenario. The pressure felt by mentors to pass a weak student, and the power balance within the school/university relationship in similar circumstances, is also illustrated by the following contributions to the mentoring discussions:

> M3 Well, we contacted the university [not the university associated with this study] and spoke to his tutors and they didn't understand that what we were saying was right - we tried moving him into different classrooms, putting him into a different key stage, in the end he just came with me, not because of the fault of any of the other teachers but because I knew what the university was saying and they weren't going to fail him under any circumstances so we just had to get him through
>
> (SA lines 222-226)

> M3 whereas the other case we had we didn't get support from the university so that was a little bit unsettling and thinking right this is us on our own here and we can't get rid of him so we're just going to have to sort of like coach him and channel him through it
>
> M2 So yes – when he was in my class it brought out a side of mentoring that I didn't enjoy so I had to be really firm, really blunt and it wasn't fun erm, it was really difficult to try and deal with him the way he was and then because once they said they wouldn't fail him M3 just took over
>
> (SA lines 264-270)

These excerpts made it clear that the study's mentors felt under pressure to pass students and in this case the mentors stated that it was explicit that the university concerned was not prepared to have a failed student. Consequently, it was apparent that the mentors felt isolated in that their judgements were neither recognised nor respected, this is in direct conflict with Stanulis and Russell's (2000, p79) view that each voice must be truly honoured in a mentoring environment where teachers, students and university educators learn from each other. If scenarios like this happened then this explained why mentors felt that there was a power imbalance, weighted in favour of the university.

Looking at further examples of when schools spoke with universities during a student's placement

> M4 I mean in the past we (*******) we've had conversations where we've had to arrange extra visits, put in a support plan during the placement
>
> M1 Yes and people talk to me and then I pass it on to [*******] and sometimes someone'll know to go straight to [******] but then sometimes I could step in and we could work together

> M5 It has been helpful on this placement to just contact *** straightaway and then it can nip things in the bud a bit quicker and get support plans and different things
>
> (SA lines 234-239)

> M3 Well, ****** is in school quite regularly - it's good to know that ****** is just on the end of the phone or just chat a problem through and it gets sorted out quicker
>
> (SA lines 312-313)

Underlined that communications, between mentors and link tutors, often arise from negative experiences ie the university will be contacted when there is a problem.

Although students were encouraged to contact their link tutor if they needed support it appeared that very few students proactively did this. Only three students reported contacting their link tutor and this was for support with explaining placement tasks and documentation to their mentors. BA68 reported finding it difficult to advise their mentor on how to navigate the placement documentation and although the link tutor's support was useful, 'my Link Tutor cleared up any misconceptions during his visit', it was not clear from this response whether the link tutor made a visit in response to the student's concerns or whether this support was given during their scheduled visit. BA70 did proactively seek help; 'I tried to contact uni and link tutor for support but no-one got back to me', aside from it being unacceptable that this student received no response it seems that the student was not persistent in contacting their link tutor as they then decided that they 'just had to try and fit in by doing what the other members of staff were doing'. PG82 experienced a different challenge when involving their link tutor; 'I asked my link tutor for help about struggling with time and uni work. The message got mixed up by the time it reached the school and I got given out to from head teacher'. Students were encouraged to contact their link tutors if they had any issues which they were finding hard to deal with but it was apparent that they were not consistently getting in touch with link tutors to seek support. Students might have been reluctant to contact their link tutors because they felt a link tutor would not respond in sufficient time, given BA70's experience. However, perhaps they did not want to appear to

their mentor as though their support was not sufficient or that they were complaining in some way about the support they were receiving from their host school, this was underlined by the head teacher's response to PG82 for having made contact with their link tutor. Another reason for not contacting the link tutor might have been that students felt that link tutors were in an 'over seeing' role, the link between a school and the university, rather than a link between student, school and university. This is a theme which will be explored further in 4.5.1.5 Caught in the Middle and Feelings of Betrayal (p180).

4.5.1.3 Trust Between Schools and Providers

SA mentors discussed an experience with one student which ultimately eroded their trust with one university:

> M3 We've talked before about certain students who thought they were above, like the mentors, so we had one chap, from ****** University, who, every time somebody gave him some advice to try and move him on, to be fair – especially if it was woman, he just didn't listen to anything so then we ended up having arguments with the university and it didn't turn out very nicely in the end because, because of his attitude
>
> (SA lines 174-178)

They went on to describe what happened:

> M3 Well, we contacted the university and spoke to his tutors and they didn't understand that what we were saying was right - we tried moving him into different classrooms, putting him into a different key stage, in the end he just came with me, not because of the fault of any of the other teachers but because I knew what the university was saying and they weren't going to fail him under any circumstances so we just had to get him through, he did actually get on better with males than he did females which was strange thing so he wouldn't speak back to me , he would say 'yeah, yeah – that's a great thing to do' whereas I don't think he would have ever said to the teachers in the other classrooms
>
> (SA lines 221-228)

This resonates with the earlier discussion where these same aspects of the focus group discussion were reflected upon through the lens of power. The impact of these episodes,

where the university ‘overrules’ a school’s view, is that the relationship between a school and a provider is damaged as the trust is immediately eroded (Stanulis & Russell, 2000).

Mentors from one of the focus groups clearly valued a positive, trusting relationship between themselves and a provider:

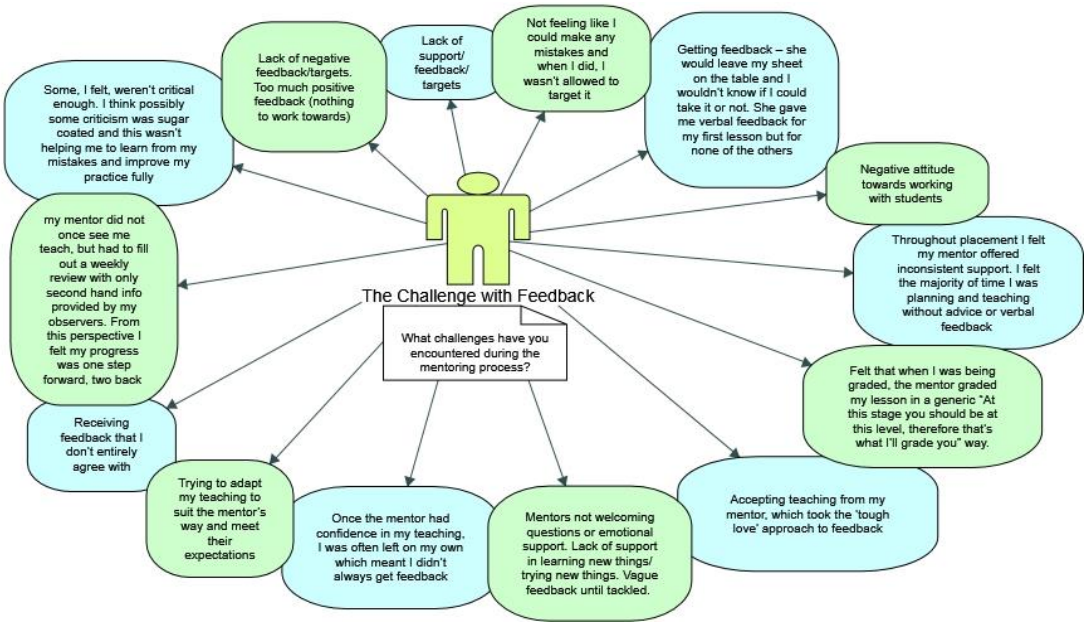
> M7 I think it’s good that we’ve known ***** as long as we have
>
> M3 Yes, the relationship with the university is important isn’t it for the student and for the mentors
>
> (SA lines 242-243)

> M5 I just think this past couple of years has been better because of the relationship we’ve built up with the university is different and made a difference to everyone’s placement really and it’s helped us as teachers a lot, it’s been really beneficial
>
> (SA lines 425-427)

These excerpts relate to the value of a positive relationship between the university and school-based mentors. It is interesting that the mentors talked about the length of time that they had known a link tutor for, this would not necessarily make for a stronger more trusting relationship but in this particular case it had clearly helped to do that. It is not always possible for a link tutor to be assigned to a particular school for a long period of time but as these mentors discussed valuing a positive and trusting relationship it is important to think about how such a relationship can be fostered and encouraged in a potentially short time. Schools may have well-established relationships with particular link tutors, but this is not possible with students as students will be assigned to a link tutor for a placement, rather than a succession of placements. It also needs to be considered, however, that a student, on a placement in a school which has a strong relationship with the link tutor, may be more reluctant to contact a link tutor for further support as they link tutor could be viewed almost as an extension of the school, or at the very least partial to the school.

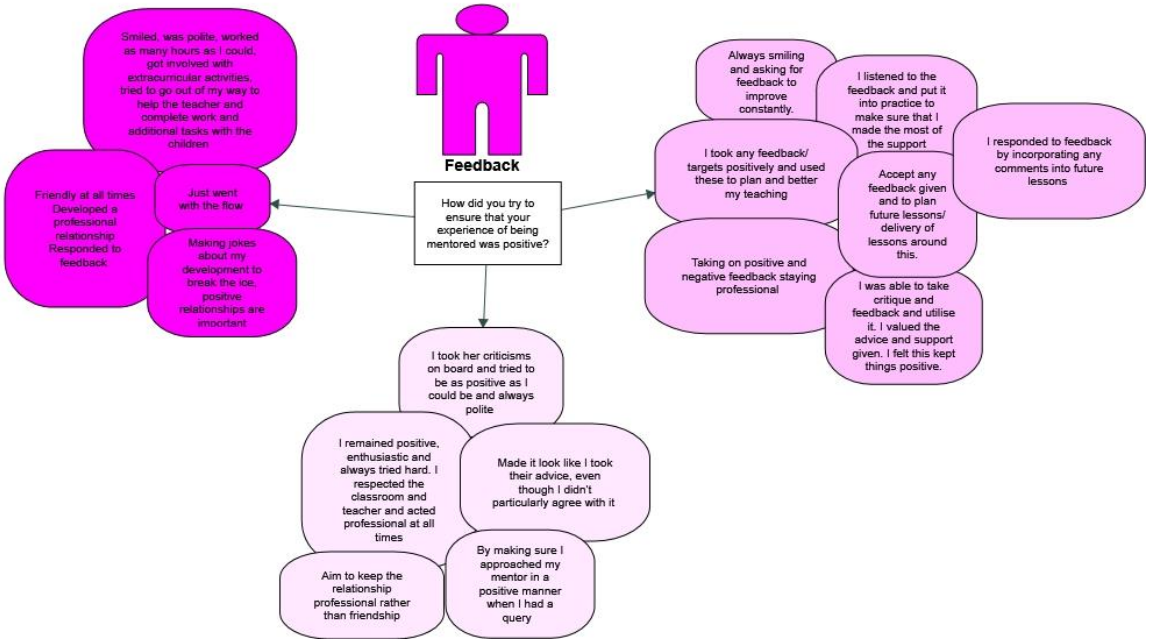
4.5.1.4 Delivery and Receipt of Challenging Feedback

Figure 25: Issues with Feedback, identified by mentees



As illustrated by the following comments, some students felt that their mentors were not able to deliver potentially challenging messages: 'Some, I felt, weren't critical enough. I think possibly some criticism was sugar coated and this wasn't helping me to learn from my mistakes and improve my practice fully' (BA40) and there was 'too much positive feedback (nothing to work towards)' (BA58). These remarks indicated that these students were keen to improve, recognising the need for constructive feedback and focussed target setting. They were actively expecting constructive criticism and were disappointed when they did not receive it, believing this would hinder their progress. This is in line with Bullough (2005) who noted that some mentors can struggle to give critical feedback to a student teacher. The comments of BA40 and BA58 also suggested that their mentors did not feel able to deliver their feedback honestly so perhaps they were lacking the skills needed to deliver less positive feedback confidently or of course it may suggest that these students were overly self-critical and that the overly positive feedback was well-deserved.

Figure 26: What did students do to ensure their experience of mentoring was positive?



With regard to when students did receive less positive feedback BA54 cited 'Receiving feedback that I don't entirely agree with' as being a particular challenge of the mentoring process but added that they 'accepted the feedback and took guidance on board' in order to progress, this response was in line with other students' responses (see Figure 26, p174). PG56 also cited 'Accepting feedback from my mentor, which took the ''tough love' approach to feedback' as a challenge. Both of these students dealt with their feedback positively, yet passively, acknowledging that although they did not like it they acted on it to ensure their professional development, or perhaps to ensure a more satisfactory outcome at the next feedback session, given that their mentors were also their assessors (Hobson & Malderez, 2013). BA57 suggested that they 'Accept any feedback given', demonstrating that they were prepared to deal positively with feedback, regardless of whether they felt it justified or not. BA59 reported that; 'I took any feedback/targets positively and used these to plan and better my teaching. This showed I was appreciating the feedback'. These comments demonstrated that these students were aware of a need to show explicitly to their mentors that they were actively listening to their advice. Interestingly, these respondents used the verbs 'to take' and 'to accept' when reporting what they did with the feedback. Their choice of verbs resonated

with those used when students cited what they did with the placement documentation: ‘inform’, ‘show’, ‘tell’, again verbs which did not indicate any level of engagement but instead, receipt or delivery. This indicated that they felt that feedback was not an area for discussion but something which was to be ‘accepted’ and irrefutable. This passive response must stem from the power discrepancy between student teachers and mentors, where the mentor has considerable power in providing feedback (Anderson, 2007).

One student (BA83), considered how the mentor might have felt when constructing feedback and suggested that one of the reasons why their mentor took feedback home to complete was that they were possibly uncomfortable completing this in the presence of the student:

> My mentor seemed unsure as to how to complete my grade descriptor at first and felt more comfortable in doing it at home, as she had very little time to do so at school. I tried to ensure that our weekly meetings left enough time for my mentor to fill out my grade descripted and weekly evaluative sheet with me but she felt uncomfortable perhaps?

This could be a reasonable explanation as it would be easier for a mentor to think about how to phrase or couch written feedback when not being observed by the mentee who they were writing about, if being observed the temptation may be to not deliver those more difficult messages as clearly, or perhaps at all. The mentor could also be feeling uncomfortable as BA83 has noted that they seem unsure about how the paperwork was to be completed and so the mentor may well not have wished to appear lacking in knowledge in front of the mentee. It would be easier for the mentor to have suggested to the student that the reason for taking the paperwork home was due to time constraints rather than because they were uncomfortable doing this in the presence of the student or because they were not sure of what they were doing. Any of these three causes for the mentor’s potential discomfort could be addressed by preparation for the role, beyond the delivery of the administrative aspects, underlining Mentor M7’s (SA lines 100-102) opinion that mentoring skills may not exist in all teachers. As tensions can subsequently arise when a mentor lacks the skills to mentor (Soutter, Kerr-Roubicek and Smith, 2000, p6) this underlines the need for mentors to

develop the understanding that being an experienced teacher does not necessarily equate to being an effective mentor and so be prepared for the process.

BA40 was also explicit about the discomfort experienced by a mentee when a mentor recorded observations of their practice:

> I think when the mentor would write things down as you were teaching it's unsettling. It is so because you then begin to think of what you just did for them to write something down and if it was good or bad which then puts you off your teaching for a while.

Although this student was talking about when a mentor was actively observing a lesson, it does make clear the impact of an assessor writing their notes to inform an assessment about a student in front of them. University guidance suggested that it was reasonable for a student and a mentor to sit together whilst some of this grading documentation was completed but this was potentially an uncomfortable scenario for both mentor and mentee unless both were secure and confident in their roles and expectations of the process. Student BA85 also cited 'getting feedback' as a particular challenge of the mentoring process and described how it was delivered; 'she would leave my sheet on the table and I wouldn't know if I could take it or not.'. By leaving a student's feedback on a table the mentor could be perceived as disregarding the need for confidentiality. Classrooms are busy places, frequented by children and other adults, by leaving feedback out and not being explicit with the mentee about whether they were able to take it would allow for this feedback to be read by others. This is also further evidence of the inherent power imbalance, the fact that the student teacher was not sure if they were 'allowed' to read it or not when it was left in a public place underlines the vulnerable position of the student teacher. The student in this scenario was made to feel uncomfortable, not knowing whether they were permitted to look at the comments made about them and yet these comments were left open to be looked at potentially by anybody who might be passing. This underlines the need for mentors to think carefully about the potential impact of their actions associated with the giving of feedback and relates to Timostsuk and Ugaste's (2010) stance around needing to think about not only *what* feedback is delivered but *how* it is delivered. The intention behind one of their actions

could be misconstrued easily by a mentee, in a vulnerable position, in the scenario where there is a distinct power imbalance.

Mentors, in both focus groups, discussed at length their experiences of delivering feedback perceived as negative by a student. M1 (SA, lines 273-274) said

> when you're with a student and you're giving them bad feedback or etc and then they bring in something personal you're like er 'oh no' or they start crying and you're like 'oh crap'

describing how, in these cases, the mentor stopped behaving as a professional and had a personal response to a student citing personal circumstances, or becoming distressed and so it is possible to see how this episode might conclude abruptly with such a change of focus. The students in these scenarios did not appear to be disagreeing with a judgement but in effect were providing an explanation for their performance which might then deflect the attention from that professional performance to their personal self. The students were possibly, albeit indirectly, asking for emotional support or recognition and consideration of their situation as a mitigating circumstance, at this point the mentor could be put into the position of being made to feel uncomfortable at having caused a student's distress. This type of experience might naturally have an impact on subsequent feedback sessions delivered by this mentor. They may be reluctant to deliver challenging messages for fear of having to deal with a mentee's emotional response. Being able to deal appropriately with a mentee who has an emotional response to feedback delivered is a skill which evidently needs to be present in the mentor to allow the feedback to continue constructively and to prevent the mentor from avoiding the delivery of any challenging messages in the future. Experiences of this nature also link directly with the dichotomy of aspects of the mentors' roles, being mentor and also assessor, causing confusion and potentially making the relationship unworkable (Bradbury and Koballa, 2008).

Mentor M4 (SA lines 278-279) talked about a different, yet still challenging, response from a student: 'so when she said things like 'oh it's because I'm a lesbian' when she'd had a bad lesson I mean what do you say to that? No, if you were heterosexual I wouldn't like it either?'

Here a student was not accepting the feedback given and responded defensively by suggesting that the mentor was punishing her for her sexuality rather than feeding back honestly on her performance. An accusation of such behaviour is a significant allegation of unprofessional behaviour and contrary to the requirement for teachers to show tolerance of, and respect for, the rights of others (DfE, 2011) which could have consequences for the mentor in question. From this point on this mentor still reported the delivery of honest feedback but would only give feedback alongside another colleague (SA line 284), to safeguard herself.

Mentor M9 (SB lines 104-106) also identified defensive behaviour as challenging to deal with:

> M9 The thing I find difficult is when you're giving them feedback and I'm always quite fair and I tell them what they did well I'm giving them feedback about what they need to improve upon but it's when they get very defensive and they start to turn the feedback into a bit of an argument

This mentor regarded herself as 'fair' and was clear about the need to ensure that a positive message was delivered in addition to any aspects which would be areas to be worked upon but discussed this 'defensive' student who she felt 'really didn't listen to anything' (M9, SB line 107) she said. At this point she asked the Headteacher to come and observe the student's practice (M9, SB lines 107-109) so that the message was not being delivered solely by her and potentially to underline to the student that this really was an identified area for improvement rather than a personal attack. By M9 asking the Headteacher to observe the student the mentor was requesting the support from the colleague in school with the highest status. This would not only verify the feedback but might have emphasised to the student that this feedback was indisputable. As Mentor M13, (SB lines 247-252) also recognised the need, at times, to deliver feedback alongside another then it would seem that a common strategy, to support a mentor in delivering feedback, which they would perceive to be unwanted, was to ask for the presence of a colleague. This strategy could be to provide a witness to the conversation if a mentor felt that they were not being listened to (M9, SB line

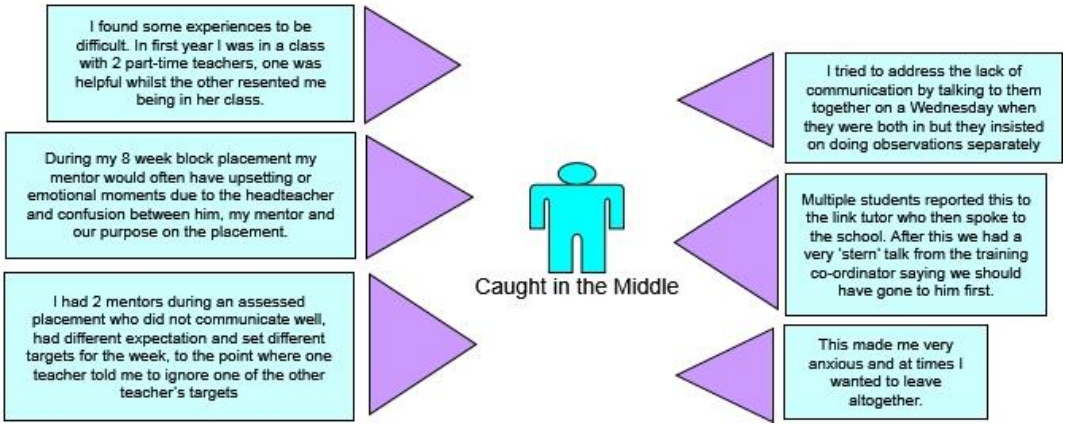
107) by a student or it could be to add weight to the message and engender a feeling in the mentee that this was the final message, one which was not open to discussion, linking back to the idea of feedback being irrefutable (Anderson, 2007), as discussed earlier.

From the student's perspective, the implementation of this strategy, would make them feel as though they were not permitted to discuss this feedback, the seniority of staff being overtly re-established and the student's position in that hierarchy made clear. As students (BA54, BA56 and PG57) implied that initiating any discussion of feedback was not a role taken by them it was possibly the mentors' perception that the students were being defensive by asking questions about the feedback. By being asked questions a mentor may feel challenged by a mentee, which is contrary to the established powerful relationship between mentor and mentee, where the more common role for the mentee to adopt would be a submissive one (Bradbury and Koballa, 2008). In some of these instances, a mentee's response could be interpreted as defensive or aggressive. There is also a point at which a mentor could perceive a student who was trying to be assertive as perhaps being defensive or aggressive if that display of assertiveness worked against the established power imbalance. It is acknowledged in the literature (Beck and Kosnik, 2002, p93) that for feedback to be useful it 'must be presented in a collegial spirit, with opportunity for genuine dialogue about the matters in question'. These findings would support that stance but what they add is that this was still not happening consistently, more than two decades later, at this point we can conjecture why this might be.

Mentors at SA acknowledged that sometimes there might be a personality clash between mentors and mentees and talked about ensuring that mentees were observed by others in school to mitigate against that: M4 (SA lines 239-240) reasoned that 'Also – just in case it's like a mismatch of teacher and mentee make sure that the year group partner has done a crossover observation as well just to make sure'. This approach of asking another colleague to contribute seemed to be more in the interests of fairness towards the mentee ie making sure that they had had an objective observation.

4.5.1.5 Caught in the Middle and Feelings of Betrayal

Figure 27: Issues with Relationships, identified by mentees



Some students described being caught in the middle of some tense relationships within their school settings as aspects which unsettled them. These were relationships which went beyond the fundamental one-to-one relationship between mentee and mentor (Caruso, 2000) to mentoring relationships where a student was being mentored by more than one person in a school or where they became caught up in tense relationships beyond that of the tight mentoring one.

One student (BA52) described a situation where s/he was being mentored by two teachers who were job-sharing the role of being his/her mentor:

> I had 2 mentors during an assessed placement who did not communicate well, had different expectation[s] and set different targets for the week, to the point where one teacher told me to ignore one of the other teacher's targets
>
> I tried to address the lack of communication by talking to them together on a Wednesday when they were both in but they insisted on doing observations separately

This student was clearly caught in the middle of two teachers who were not working together to mentor her/him. Instead, they were each mentoring this student separately to the point

where even the targets they were setting were different. Tillema and Smith (2009) stated that it can be confusing for student teachers when they are given multiple perspectives about their teaching, at that point they can then find the decisions about which feedback to accept and what to act on (Shute, 2008). However, variability can give the student access to some interesting viewpoints (Tillema, 2009) and this could be a useful rationale for establishing a constellation of mentors (Higgins and Kram, 2001). However, this opportunity was not taken and at least one of the mentors, being aware that the other mentor had set different targets, told the student to ignore the other teacher's targets. The student tried to address this lack of communication, and professionalism, but it appears that the two mentors were not prepared to work together to support the student. If these two teachers were not able to work together to support a student then their lack of communication or preparedness to work together, must have been noticed in other areas of their work. The rate of progress of the children in their shared class must have been impeded, for example, and so it begs the question why they were selected by the school to host a student's placement together. The DfE (2016, p7) highlighted that schools have a role to play in supporting mentors and students by creating and fostering a positive environment to allow the participants to fulfil their mentoring expectations. It would appear that this was not the case for this particular mentee and it would be hard for them to navigate such an uncomfortable position in a school when they would not have the power, or be in a position to be able, to make a positive change in this situation.

In a slightly different way, another student report having two class teachers as challenging. BA53 found that the experience of having two mentors who treated her differently made her anxious:

> I found some experiences to be difficult. In first year I was in a class with 2 part-time teachers, one was helpful whilst the other resented me being in her class.
>
> This made me very anxious and at times I wanted to leave altogether.

Being resented by one teacher made this student anxious but also trying to negotiate two different relationships with the two teachers also contributed to the student's anxiety. As discussed in the literature review, a teacher being 'given' a student would not be conducive to the most successful of mentoring relationships (Garvey et al., 2018). As this student's presence was resented by one of his/her mentors then this mentor cannot have wanted to mentor the student and must not have been in a position to decline the opportunity.

Students BA53 and BA52 tried to deal with these situations independently; neither student reported contacting their link tutor for any advice on how to progress.

In another scenario, where students felt caught in the middle, one student (BA39) described the consequences of some students having shared their concerns regarding communication between school staff with their link tutor:

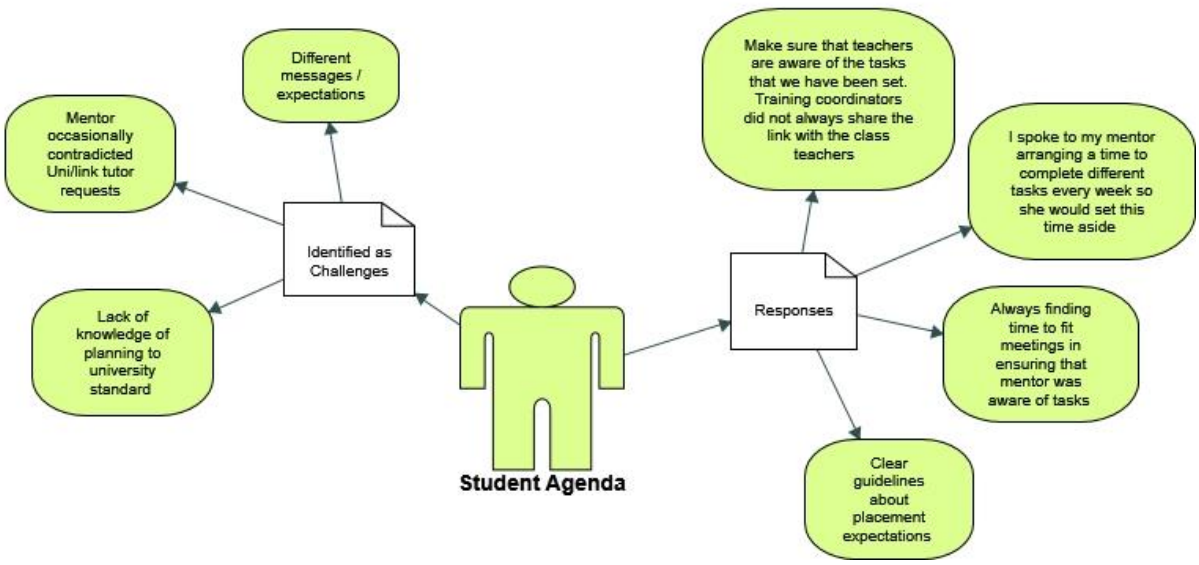
> During my 8 week block placement my mentor would often have upsetting or emotional moments due to the headteacher and confusion between him, my mentor and our purpose on the placement.
>
> Multiple students reported this to the link tutor who then spoke to the school. After this we had a very 'stern' talk from the training co-ordinator saying we should have gone to him first.
>
> In my perspective it seems we should email link tutors with any problems and therefore didn't feel we had done anything wrong.

The arising implications of this scenario link clearly with issues discussed in the section 4.5.1.2 Reactive Communication (p167), earlier in the chapter. Students were advised, by the university, to contact their link tutor if they had any issues which they were finding hard to deal with and so these students followed protocol. Having shared concerns with their link tutor, these students were clearly made to feel uncomfortable about having done this by their school's training co-ordinator. The students' link tutor presumably contacted the school to discuss the students' concerns but in doing so put those students in a difficult position because the school felt that the students should have spoken with them first. We do not know the nature of the conversation between the link tutor and school so we do not know if it

was ‘what’ was said or the ‘way’ in which it was said which unsettled the school. Given that the concerns were surrounding staff relationships with the Head Teacher it is understandable that the students were reluctant to raise concerns with the school themselves. This incident demonstrates how important it is for link tutors to handle their students’ concerns sensitively. As discussed earlier, mentoring is an interpersonal process and all individuals involved determine its development and outcome (Ambrosetti et al., 2017). This must extend to link tutors who play their part in the mentoring process, often when it is in its most vulnerable state, given that they are usually only contacted proactively when there is an issue to be resolved. The episode also illustrated the power dynamics that this student was constrained by and which are capable of silencing students (Patrick, 2013). It is imperative that students must not be disadvantaged as a result of having sought support from a link tutor. This experience would also discourage a student from contacting a link tutor in the future for any support of this nature and might explain why students often do not contact their link tutors for support on placement but instead prefer to wait until placement is actually finished before they raise any issues, once they are back on ‘safe ground’.

4.5.1.6 Students’ Agendas

Figure 28: Students’ Agendas, issues identified by mentees



From the mentors' perspectives, there may be a feeling amongst mentees that the purpose of placement was primarily to fulfil the requirements of their training and assessment. We know that there is a significant workload associated with placement for a student (Ambrosetti, 2014). However, it seemed as though the experiences of mentoring being reflected upon, by the mentors, indicated that students were too focussed on their own tasks, at the expense of other enriching experiences available to them in school. The study's mentors also felt that the students, in being too focussed on their own sets of task, lost sight of the needs of their children. All mentors discussed mentees often approaching placement with their own agenda as the prime purpose of placement for them, as described by M12 (SB lines 152-158):

> [I want] a trainee who comes in and *wants* to know about the school, the wider, and I don't mean the *standards'* wider responsibilities that they can just tick, I just want to know some information about the school and the staff in the school and the routines in the school, just take a genuine interest in what's going on rather than 'it's a functional 6 weeks and I must teach these children' – there's a *huge* difference between a trainee who genuinely wants to immerse themselves in the actual day to day running of the school, I think it's vital, rather than locking them away in a cupboard and doing *their*, their little bit because it is *so much broader* than that

This study's mentor participants wanted their mentees to go beyond viewing their placement as a vehicle to becoming a teacher. M2 (SA lines 166-177) said she wanted, from a mentee

> Genuine interest and care in the children, someone who seems to really want to be there and to get to know the kids and isn't doing it to 'pass the course'

another mentor felt that this was something immediately obvious to a mentor, M3 (SA line 170) 'You can tell straightaway, pretty much'. M7, M4 and M3's (SA lines 195-203) contributions indicated that they felt that mentees were too interested in their own practice and performance and that perhaps they were too introspective:

> M7 I've had a trainee who was only interested in themselves so I just felt that they'd come in and they were bothered about their grades and about how the lesson went but you need to be bothered about the kids, that needs to be number one and I know it's hard because it is about them and it is their career but when they come in they need

> to want to make a difference to the children because that's why you're in the job long term so..
>
> M4 That would happen if they were doing that for the children because what they'd be doing for the children would be right.
>
> M7 Yeah
>
> M3 It's like a self-fulfilling prophecy

The notion of students having their own agenda is certainly understandable, students are making a significant investment, both in terms of time and finance, in their education and consequently must feel that they are entitled to a high quality university experience, and outstanding school-based training. If a student's financial investment is considered, then it must be immediately possible to see that they feel they should be receiving all that they need to support them in their transition to teacher. Students will be aware that schools are paid to train them but perhaps mentors are not acutely aware of the fact that their school has been paid to mentor students as it might be rare for a class teacher to feel the impact of that funding in their particular class, the 'money from having the students' may well be put towards whole school initiatives and so an individual mentor may not benefit explicitly from the impact of that funding for their own class. This could only add to the perception of mentors that mentoring is not a high status activity as they receive no enhancement for undertaking the role.

Conversely, some students felt that their own needs could be overlooked by mentors (see Figure 28, p183). BA49 described what they found particularly unsettling about the mentoring process:

> Either not giving time to allow activities to be carried out or switching groups or changing who I had planned for. Some teachers take advantage of the work (i.e. when doing **** I spent most days just reading with everyone in the class)

This led to students feeling undervalued in that they felt their own work was not deemed to be important by their mentor. There was perhaps a lack of appreciation here on the part of students, of how focussed their mentors were on the wellbeing and progress of their children. The expectation of their mentors was that the students would have children's

wellbeing and a desire for children's progress at the heart of what they did. Evidently, there was also a lack of appreciation on the part of the mentors for the work which students were required to complete by the university which their schools had agreed to support.

4.5.2 Time

Figure 29: Issues with Time, identified by mentees

42 of the mentee respondents (23%) explicitly cited their mentors having a lack of time for them as being an issue which they found challenging to deal with, making overt statements such as 'my mentor did not have time for me' (PG94). Figure 29 represents a word analysis of those responses which cited time as an issue, it is clear to see that the main issue with time related directly to their mentor. Mentees described a range of effects of a mentor not having sufficient time for them, BA63 stated, after citing 'The lack of time a mentor has, due to their own workload' as a challenge, that 'Sometimes they're [mentors] unaware of what to fill out and how often, often just wanting things signed off and completed as quickly as possible'. The feeling of being brushed off may only compound a student's perception that the mentoring process is low on the list of a teacher's priorities and inhibit their ability to seek further guidance or support from their mentor. Interestingly, none of the mentors identified finding the time to mentor effectively as an issue within the mentoring process. At face value, mentors not reporting finding the time to mentor as a challenge might mean that they did not

recognise this as an area of tension. However, it also needs to be acknowledged that finding it difficult to find the time to mentor may not have been identified by mentors as this could be perceived as being a shortcoming of theirs. A shortcoming which they may not wish to highlight to the researcher, employed by the university which pays their school to host placements, and train students. My study suggests that a lack of time given by mentors is an issue perceived by mentees as challenging for them to deal with and one which they feel impacts upon their ability to make progress. This is triangulated by a lack of time for the mentoring process being highlighted within the literature (Hobson, 2016) and the fact that we know that teachers already deal with significant workloads (DfE, 2018; DfE, 2018b; DfE, 2019e), before adding in the additional work associated with mentoring a student. It is worth noting at this point that it is also apparent within the data that students have different perceptions of what 'reasonable time' may constitute. It might be that some students had potentially unreasonable expectations of their mentors. For instance, BA62 felt that one of the most useful things a mentor could do would be to provide them with their personal contact details and cited that their mentor was 'readily available at all times to provide assistance and guidance'. BA76 reinforced this view as they talked about appreciating 'constant contact' and speaking to their mentor during weekends. The data reflected a wide range of experiences in terms of the amount of a mentor's time given to a mentee. This may well have led to some students feeling disadvantaged. For instance, if some mentors were in constant contact with their mentees this may have resulted in other students, who did not receive this amount of attention, perceiving that their mentors were not being sufficiently attentive.

4.5.2.1 Not Having Time

Mentees suggested a variety of reasons to explain why creating time for the mentoring process was difficult. Mentees were often acutely aware of their mentors' workloads, as demonstrated by PG72's response; 'Although my mentor was very welcoming and

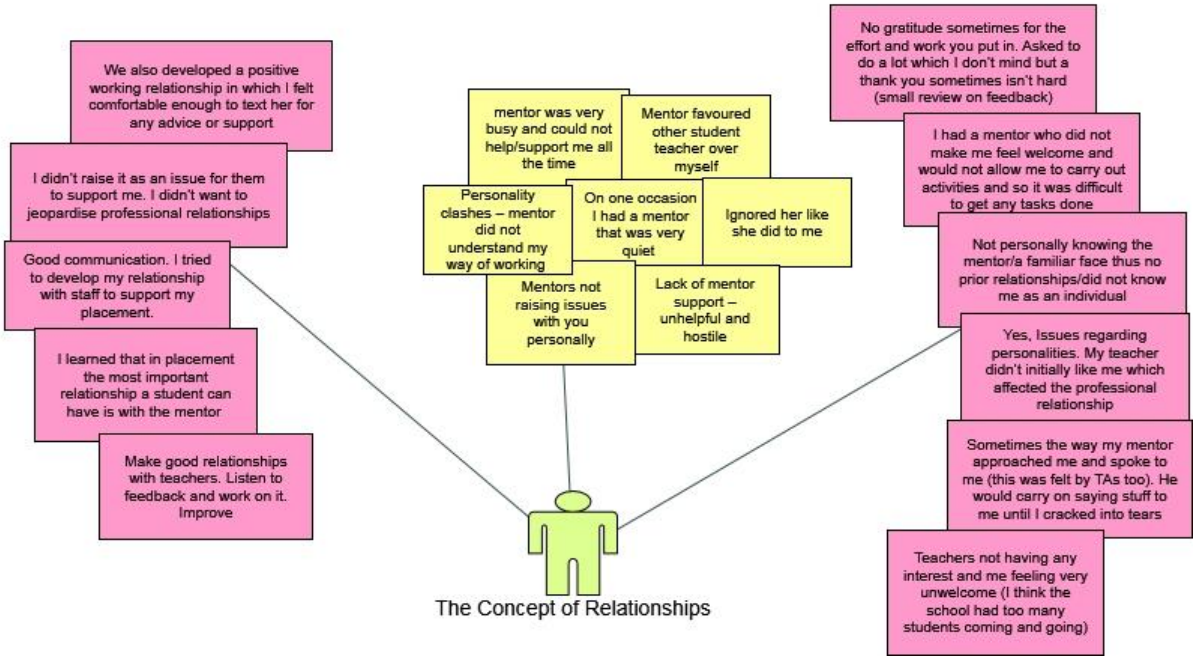
approachable she was also very busy and I felt uncomfortable asking her to complete weekly reviews etc with me'. PG72's discomfort was clear; s/he was appreciative of the mentor being welcoming but recognised that the mentor was busy and consequently found it hard to ask him/her to engage in the mentoring process. Ideally, a mentee should not need to *ask* a mentor to engage with the mentoring process at all so that in itself could be disquieting but having to ask when it has been made clear that the mentor is busy with other priorities must be particularly difficult for a mentee. PG7 said 'Asking the mentor to take time out of her busy week to have regular meetings for weekly reviews' was a challenge and noted that 'Uni request a weekly review – however my mentor did not always have a spare 30 minutes at the end of school, due to other responsibilities' which perhaps indicated that they felt the university's stipulation for a weekly meeting was unreasonable. It was possible that PG7 was made to feel like this by his/her mentor's inability to find the time to meet. If a mentor cannot find the time to meet then the mentee may in turn feel that a meeting is not something worth finding the time for and the implication of that is that the meeting is not necessary. The standards for ITT mentors (DfE, 2016, p8) recognised the importance of 'time' stating that mentors should 'prioritise meetings and discussions with a trainee' and also that it was the school's responsibility to give mentors 'sufficient time as part of their timetable to observe trainees, provide constructive feedback and to have meetings and discussions outside of the classroom to monitor progress.' (DfE, 2016, p7). With this in mind, mentees might have reasonably assumed that they were worthy of a mentor's time and that it would not be seen as something they would have to be proactive in securing. Clearly, some mentees found being proactive in seeking time difficult as they felt as though they were requiring too much of their mentor when, in reality, it was their entitlement to be given sufficient time.

Given the workload of mentors outside of their mentoring role, mentees often felt that they were not a priority for the mentor and consequently unable to ask for the attention which they needed. Some students also felt that they were not a mentor's priority because of the

number of students they had to mentor e.g. BA83 states that their ‘mentor had two PGCE students in the first 4 weeks and I felt that their support was prioritised.’ Having three student teachers in one class, being mentored by one mentor, is problematic as each student requires enough teaching time with the children of that class to practise. If two students were well established in class before the third started then it would be clear to see how the third student might feel unable to find a place in that teaching team or ask for help from the mentor in a traditional model of mentoring. Another example of a school not placing a student with a mentor who had the time to devote to the process was where BA90 suggested that something the university could do was ensure that mentors were ‘in the setting’ as his/hers was only there in the mornings. This was potentially concerning as this might suggest that the school had requested a student to address a staffing issue or it may be that this student had an unreasonable expectation that his/her mentor should be constantly available. When a school places students the university would make the assumption that neither a class, nor a mentor, was ‘over loaded’ with students but, according to the students surveyed, this was something which happened (e.g. BA78, BA83). There are some speculative reasons for this overloading such as a school seeing the financial gains of having students as the primary reason for hosting a placement or perhaps because a school was dealing with staffing shortages and so having students would help to address those issues. Neither of these reasons for hosting a placement would be likely to result in a quality experience for a mentee as the focus would not be on their development from the outset, as described by BA78: ‘Due to 3 student teachers being in 1 class we were left to teach while teacher/mentor attended CPD and therefore did not receive much support’.

4.5.2.2 Not Wanting to Make time

Figure 30: Impact of the Mentoring Relationship, issues identified by mentees



Not all mentees thought that the mentor's workload was a reason why time might be an issue. BA65 reported that 'some mentors would not make time for meetings' this was interesting as this mentee thought that the mentor 'would not' make time rather than 'could not'. Some mentees reported that they felt as though they were not wanted by their mentor e.g. BA 18 described his/her experience and the profound impact that this had;

> Whilst on my **** placement my mentor did not support me in any way. When I offered to help, staying back after school, she didn't want me there. This led to me feeling like the profession I always wanted to pursue was no longer for me. The mentor didn't want me in her class and as a result of this I didn't want to be there.

Other students also reported feeling as though they were not wanted by their mentors; '[I] Felt awkward and unwanted at times, like a spare part', (PG87) and PG86 felt that their mentor had a 'Negative attitude towards working with students'. This perception was underlined by one mentor (SB mentors, M13, lines 21-31) who talked about her own

experience of having been mentored by someone who did not appear to want a student for the 'right reasons':

> M13 I did 4 placements when I was training to be a teacher, 2 of those I had really good mentors and 2 of them I didn't and it's the 2 who weren't good mentors that I remember the best because it was the hardest time and for me it's about making sure that when someone comes into school who's in that position that I was in, all those years ago, that it doesn't happen to them because I know how horrible it is to be doing something that's as *tough* as this and have somebody who's not fully supporting you because a couple of the ones I had didn't really want a student it was the idea of eventually having someone in the classroom and you could go and do your own thing… that was quite appealing… you definitely get a sense, when you get a mentor like that it's not about mentoring it's about using you for a different reason… and, having experienced that, I wouldn't want that for somebody that was coming into my classroom. I would like to mentor someone in the way that I feel was more supportive

SA mentors (lines 104-110) also aired the notion of some mentors being unkind to their mentees:

> M1 And it is going back to that thing of who you had as a mentor yourself because I had these two [referring to colleagues at the table] so it's like you learn from them and then it was easy, well not easy, but it was nice to see what… and then I could take it on and there are some teachers currently who had awful mentors and I don't understand that… you're all training to do the same job?
>
> M7 It's like a power thing sometimes
>
> M1 I know [& general agreement from around the table]
>
> M7 Some mentors er want to be *nasty* to you

This does resonate with one or two comments from students who used emotive language when describing their mentors' attitudes towards them; BA17 described his/her mentor as 'unhelpful and hostile' and PG93 felt 'wilfully' undermined by his/her mentor. These mentoring relationships were missing the fundamental relational qualities which were inherent in the models for mentoring, considered in the literature review chapter (Ambrosetti, 2014, 2017; Anderson & Shannon, 1988; Cochran et al., 2017; Hallam et al., 2012; Hobson, 2016; Hudson, 2004; Lofthouse, 2018) and consequently could not yield positive experiences of the process for any of the participants. These experiences, described by both

mentees and mentors, indicate that some teachers must be given the role of mentor with little regard for whether they are seeking that role or not. Potentially, this establishes a context where procedural relationships, based on power, 'centre on the mentor/mentee relationship as 'apprenticeship' where support may be deficient and compliance expected' (Mackie, 2017, p3) rather than a context which recognises the student teacher as a 'person' in the process described in Yeomans and Sampson's (1994) work.

4.5.2.3 The Right Time to be a Mentor

Hobson et al. (2008, p212) discussed how student teachers felt inhibited by mentors who were in leadership positions within schools e.g. Deputy Head Teachers. The students in this study did not raise this but some explicitly raised the challenges associated with being mentored by a member of staff with leadership responsibilities (PG94) in terms of the time they were able to give to the student. BA73 also highlighted this when s/he described one of the challenges of the process as 'Finding most appropriate time relating to mentor (different days and times) as she was deputy head and had a lot of commitments'.

There were some issues raised about being mentored by someone in the early stages of their career but these did not relate to the time that these mentors had available to them. 'My mentor had just finished her NQT year when I went into her class. She gave me a lack of support and guidance' (BA87), this respondent did not explicitly state that the cause for the lack of support and guidance was due to his/her mentor having recently qualified but as they mention this the implication is that they felt this was an underlying cause for the lack of guidance and support.

The study's mentors had conflicting views about when the optimal time in a teacher's career might be to mentor. They discussed the potential advantages and disadvantages of mentoring at those different stages but ultimately decided that perhaps a mentor's 'personality' was more important to the success of a mentoring process, as reflected by M12's contribution:

> M12 I think it depends on the individual, I think it's possible for a 2nd year teacher to be a very very good mentor because having been a trainee themselves it's still very fresh in their minds etc the flip side, the opposite of that is experienced teachers can be very experienced and proficient mentors so I don't think it matters, that's my own opinion
>
> (M12 SB Mentors, lines 187-190)

This was also underlined by M2 in the SA mentors' discussion

> Yeah, I think a newly qualified, well not a new newly qualified but a young, relatively experienced teacher can be a mentor depending on their experience and who *they* are
>
> (M2 SA Mentors, lines 94-95)

There were further discussions surrounding their own experiences of being mentored by teachers towards the ends of their careers:

> M4 I think as well for my experience of when I was going through university I had a mentor who was at the very end of her career and like, you know, within 2 years of retirement and because she had seen the cycle of the literacy strategy, the numeracy strategy, no curriculum at all, and the cycles of time they sometimes put you off by saying what do you want to go into teaching for?' And like if you get it too late you have to be careful not to put them off because it's hard enough to recruit in the first place.
>
> M2 Yeah, I had a mentor who was leaving at the end of that year and it was really obvious that they just didn't want to be there, they weren't dealing with any of the issues in the school, it wasn't their problem anymore, that made it really hard, really hard
>
> M7 And then it's a really bad experience for students, that you're just setting them off on their career in the wrong frame of mind
>
> (SA Mentors, lines 114-124)

Interestingly, a mentor from each focus group who had mentored a student within their first two years of teaching cited slightly different areas of tension resulting from them being younger than their mentees:

> M1 But that was a little bit tricky because she was older and I find sometimes the age gap between and especially a male, an older male, you find it harder when you have a young female [as the mentor]
>
> M2 We have had that before
>
> M1 Yeah, a few times

(SA Mentors, lines 90-93)

> M8 I had one in my second year, it was a paired one and I found it hard, well – she was a difficult one, wasn't she? [turning to others - murmurs of agreement] she was quite tricky and she was a lot older than me as well so I found the age thing quite difficult and because I wasn't that experienced yet I did feel a bit like 'well, is this what I should be telling her?'… Maybe if she'd been a different student or if I'd been a different sort of character then maybe it'd have been fine
>
> M11 Or if you had been *olde*r than her
>
> M8 Yeah, yeah
>
> (SB Mentors, lines 202-208)

Both of these mentors talked about experiences of feeling uncomfortable mentoring a student older than themselves when they were only recently qualified but M8 did suggest that if she had been a different character then it might have been a more positive experience. When discussing this issue mentors discussed the amount of experience a mentor would have, as a teacher. They did not particularly discuss how the different types of experiences gained by a teacher, with any additional levels of responsibility in school, would assist them with mentoring. However, M4 (SA Mentors, M4 lines 84-87) did implicitly suggest that 'by experience' s/he was not just referring to 'time in the classroom' but to some level of managerial experience which brought with it experience of coaching and mentoring,

> I think you need a certain length of time in the profession to have developed coaching and mentoring strategies … wonderful teaching but the whole pastoral care and things like that, things like the NPQICL and experience of coaching and mentoring strategies that can be taken through the rest of their career

this aligns with Evertson and Smithey's (2000) stance that an experienced teacher is not necessarily an effective mentor.

In contrast to the mentees surveyed, the mentors did not identify that mentors in leadership positions within school would have less time available to them to mentor. As each focus group was made up of mentors with different levels of responsibility, working together as a team, this could have been due to a mentor not wishing to create the impression that they felt one member of staff had more time available to them than another.

4.6 Participants' Suggestions for Ways Forward

BA49 suggested that the university should 'Brief teachers more' and PG2 felt that a way forward would be to 'make sure all mentors know what is expected of them (training?)'. By making these suggestions these students were presumably assuming that this was something which the provider did not do. However, the provider did ensure that all schools were sent placement documentation which outlined expectations and offered in-depth mentor training. This suggestion indicated that the university disseminating placement information to schools was not enough as that does not equate to ensuring that mentors have accessed that information; this is an issue which is more problematic to resolve but one which clearly needs addressing. BA46 felt that the placement documentation was 'too big' and that it should be condensed so that it was 'easier for busy teachers to scan'; this was not something highlighted by mentors who suggested they would like more information. However, if mentors were not accessing documentation already sent to them effectively, it would be unlikely that they would access any further information sent to them. Consequently, re-thinking ways in which to make the materials more accessible is fundamental to mentors having a clear awareness of a placement's requirements and BA46's suggestion would seem a reasonable start, particularly given the various demands on the mentors' time.

Mentor M12's comments about mentor training were interesting as they not only triangulated the idea that training centred around practical aspects of the process but that they were indeed the aspects that mentors thought they needed to be trained in:

> M12 Well, I'm guessing most of us have done some kind of mentor training and that's useful in terms of the admin side, the paperwork side of it, I mean no one, I don't think, can teach you how to observe a lesson, you do that through your own experience but there is so much paperwork, there are so many things a trainee has to comply with, you have to have an awareness of that so pre-training I think is vital erm.. I'm not sure other than that?
>
> (SB lines 241-245)

This mentor felt that mentor training was restricted to ‘paperwork’ which was an unsettling perception for the ‘researching professional’ as the university’s mentor training covered several different aspects of preparation for the process. However, this participant did not believe that preparation beyond the practical aspects ie the paperwork, would be beneficial anyway. There was a feeling here that you can organically ‘pick up’ how to be a mentor as time moves on, through a process of trial and error. This is a perception reinforced by the notion that a mentor needs to be ‘experienced’ but just as a teacher, not necessarily as a mentor (TSC, 2016). Interestingly there was an understanding, amongst the student participants, that mentors needed to be prepared as indicated by PG93’s comment, ‘I assumed mentors were trained to support students’, the use of the word ‘support’ here indicated that that this student understood that mentoring training would go beyond the introduction of paperwork.

As mentioned, the mentors’ views resonated with the government’s mentoring guidance (TSC, 2016) which was vague in terms of its use of the term ‘experienced’ ie it was not clear whether it referred to an effective mentor being experienced in mentoring or being an experienced teacher, again underlining the idea that a good teacher will naturally be a good mentor, which is not always the case, as discussed in the literature review chapter (Evertson & Smithey, 2000). The excerpt below confirmed the study’s mentors’ perceptions as to the value and point of mentor training, prior to them hosting a student’s placement:

> M1 We had a meeting for this one didn’t we?
>
> M5 yes, mentor training
>
> M2 A meeting where they laid out all the expectations and, you know, a guide with the dates of what needs to be done, you know, what we need to be doing
>
> (SA lines 298-301)

Again, the mentors were largely focussed on the paperwork and equated mentor training with a briefing about the administrative aspects of placement.

The study's mentors would have liked to receive more information around placement. Something which they felt would be particularly useful was knowing what input their students had had prior to their placement, they felt that this information would have helped them to identify what they might need further support with:

> M7 I think it would be quite nice to know what they've been learning about at university
>
> M1 Like their timetable
>
> M7 Yes, like what lectures they've had, have they had safeguarding, things on assessment just be nice to have a little overview of what they've been told
>
> M1 Because we could fill the gaps
>
> M5 Yes, on the phonics side of things – what have they been told at university relating to phonics and the teaching of maths would be helpful because the emails I receive from students later on asking me to sign things regarding the phonics and early maths
>
> (SA lines 333-341)

This triangulates the students' perceptions of mentors having not accessed placement documentation because several aspects that the mentors referred to here were included within the placement documentation already. It would be certainly be possible to publish overviews of what the students had covered in university prior to their placements. This could be published, for example, on the website where the schools downloaded documentation from.

Some of the information which mentors would have liked to receive, prior to a student starting placement with them, could become problematic:

> M4 I think when you definitely know who's going to come on placement I think a copy of their last placement report before they get here so we've got time to think before their first meeting with us
>
> M1 We've had a couple who've like modified their targets
>
> R1 From their previous placement to this one?
>
> M1 Yeah
>
> (SA lines 341-346)

The mentor here seemed to think that a student modifying a target from a previous placement was potentially 'suspicious'. There is an implication here that students should not be modifying their targets which demonstrated that these mentors felt uneasy at the prospect of students taking ownership of their own learning. However, students were encouraged, by university-based tutors, to take ownership of their targets from placement to placement. In consultation with their guidance tutor at university, students might well have modified a target if they felt, for example, that it would not support their progress in the subsequent placement. An example of this might be around the use of a Teaching Assistant (TA). If a student was given a target about effective use of a TA but not going to be working with a TA on their next placement then the student would be actively expected to change that target to support a different area of their practice. The targets on a student's report may well be modified from one placement to the next for other reasons too. A student may have addressed a target prior to starting the next one and so it would be no longer appropriate to keep as it would merely stall the student's progress as they waited for each target to be 'signed off' by their next placement mentor. There is a second implication. M1's concern that students had modified their target might reflect an assumption that students only make progress in their teaching when they are on placement. This illustrated a limited view of the links between university-based experience and school-based experience. The implicit suggestion that students would not be in a position to make progress between placements perhaps suggests that this mentor felt that the only experiences which were valuable to a student's learning were those which were had whilst a student was on placement. Aside from the specific issue regarding placement targets, the sharing of placement reports is still problematic. It needs to be considered whether a student's whole placement report should be confidential. It is summative in nature with the target setting aspect being the formative aspect and so it does make sense to share the targets to minimise any stalling of a student's progress. Passing on placement reports between placements might cause a range of issues which impact upon a student's progress, for instance, raising issues that potentially do not

exist e.g. a mentor making comments about a student in relation to the particular context of that setting which may not exist in a different context.

This chapter identified the themes which emerged from the data and provided a rationale for the order in which they were presented and discussed. Each theme was then considered in turn and the chapter closes with mentor participants' suggestions for ways forward. The next chapter will continue the discussion of the data and introduce the proposed framework to underpin a model for mentoring, foregrounding the study's conclusion.

Chapter Five: Part 2 Discussion of Findings

This chapter will further discuss, and synthesise, the findings arising from the interpretation of the data which emerged from the study. The chapter will consider the data around the themes of:

- Expectations, Assumptions and Reality
  This section will deal with the ideals of the participants and the reality of their lived experiences, arising from the data presented around The Ideal Mentee, The Ideal Mentor and Understandings of Support

- Addressing the Areas of Tension
  Implications for future practice will be considered in the light of the exposed areas of tension within the mentoring process

- Ways Forward
  Mentor participants considered potential ways forward, these further illustrate what their perceptions were of the mentoring process

This discussion will foreground the development of the framework for mentoring and the literature will be revisited to critically situate the resulting framework within the existing models (5.2 Developing the Conceptual Framework to Underpin a Model of Mentoring p211). In doing so, the concluding chapter of the study will be contextualised effectively.

5.1 Discussion

5.1.1 Expectations, Assumptions and Reality

The data indicated that discrepancies in perceptions of what constituted a positive mentoring relationship were apparent before placements began, in the different understandings of the language used by participants. As an example of a discrepancy in perceptions, the main components of a good mentoring relationship; encouragement and support, open communication and feedback (Izadinia, 2016) were components identified by the participants in this study, however, perceptions of what those components meant differed. Data collected suggested that mentors and mentees were using the same terminology, when outlining their expectations of the mentoring process, but upon analysis it was seen that participants did not have a shared understanding of the language they were using. Students and mentors'

perceptions of the actual mentoring experience were not only different but their perceptions of what it meant, for example, to support or be supported were different and so from the outset there was potential for the development of misunderstandings and then, in some cases, resentment.

Schools are usually well used to hosting students' placements and so have experience of the mentoring process. Mentors may well have pre-conceived ideas of how it will be to support the next student, given their previous experience. Students will be mentored in this context for the first time, and perhaps, their pre-conceived ideas may be based on an idealised expectation of how it will be to be mentored. Teaching, in the media (Get into Teaching, 2018), is often presented as a profession made up of people with altruistic tendencies who wish 'to make a difference', this is also underpinned by research (Bastick, 2000; Brookhart and Freeman, 1992) and perhaps students enter their training imagining that the desire to make a difference will extend to them as mentees too. The student facing university placement documentation, and placement briefings, largely dealt with the practicalities of a placement. 'What to expect from a mentor' was covered in terms of what formal meetings to expect and the feedback delivered but the lived experience behind the check list of mentoring activities was not covered on our fast-paced programmes. Because the less superficial aspects of mentoring relationships, beyond the practicalities, were not explored then perhaps the implication to students was that they do not exist. Given that the quality of the mentoring relationship, not just the process of mentoring, is so fundamental to a student's success (Caruso, 2000) then this does require a greater degree of consideration. We need to explore with our students what it means to be mentored, what the fundamental aspects are of an effective working relationship and what the student's role might be in developing that positive relationship.

We offered in-depth mentor training to all of our partnership schools but a school's management team may have felt they needed to prioritise other training needs for their staff and so we could only deliver that training to schools who requested it. Perhaps those who

might have benefitted from such training might not have believed they needed it and those who requested it were already demonstrating that they believed mentoring to be an important, and complex, aspect of their role. We did train all of our mentors at the beginning of students' final placements but this was an abridged version which covered the basic requirements of the role and again, the focus of this was largely on the more superficial, practical aspects of the role rather than a consideration of what the impact is of a positive mentoring relationship. Not all of our students' mentors were therefore trained. For example, a student may have been on an initial assessed placement with a mentor who had not received our training and so we needed to rely on the mentor to engage with all of the placement documentation and have prepared themselves for the experience. Also, some mentors might have assumed that having received training on one programme they did not require further training when mentoring a student from a different programme. However, we do have access to all mentees prior to placements and so we would be able to ensure that at least one member of all mentoring partnerships was aware of the potential areas for misconceptions and had considered explicitly what their role might be in fostering positive relationships (Mackie, 2017) given the significant impact it has on a student's successful placement. The preparation for being mentored could be underlined by publishing placement documentation which explicitly raises awareness of the impact of misunderstandings by including a glossary of terms and an initial placement task of sharing these terms between students and mentors so that at least they could see that they may mean different things to each other. This would be a starting point in being able to find common ground and may highlight the need to articulate expectations of both parties. An exploration of the terms used across placement, within guidance tutorials, would be an effective exercise, even if this just raised students' awareness explicitly of the fact that not all those involved in the process think in the same way then this would go some way to preparing them for the possibility. The implication of this is that there is a need for a distinct student-facing mentoring strand to be built into our ITE programmes. If students and mentors were encouraged, at the beginning of placements, to compare and contrast their

understandings of such crucial terms as ‘support’ this may avoid some of the more uncomfortable scenarios which can occur later in placement and which can ultimately lead to a breaking down of a constructive student/mentor relationship.

5.1.2 Addressing the Areas of Tension

Some of the identified areas of tension within the mentoring process arose from aspects of teaching which would be beyond the remit of the provider to change and therefore alleviate to a meaningful degree. Particular aspects of teaching that a provider does not have the ability to manage is that teachers already have significant workloads (DfE, 2018), before taking on the additional responsibilities associated with mentoring a student teacher, and that they work in highly performative workplaces (Ball, 2003; Ball 2017). Although the provider would not be able to alleviate a teacher’s workload or the performative culture in which they worked they could, however, think through aspects of the mentoring experience which were particularly time-consuming and work to support a mentor to a greater degree with those aspects. Conversely, there were sources of tension identified by participants, which would be within a provider’s reach that need to be acknowledged, considered and addressed. Those specific sources of tension arose from fractures, of varying severity, in lines of communication between, and across, all stakeholders in the mentoring process: schools, mentors, the provider, mentees and link tutors.

5.1.2.1 Communication between Provider and Mentees

Mentors found that some students were not familiar with placement paperwork, or clear about their set placement tasks. This was surprising as students were all briefed and given full access to all of the associated documentation, before going out on placement. Placement briefing lectures were all recorded and then posted to the students’ eLP and so students could access these if they had not been able to attend the lectures. Consequently, the likelihood is that students were aware of the expectations. Potentially students were uncomfortable with relaying that information to mentors as they might, for example, have felt

that they were asking too much of a busy mentor to set aside time to engage with them. However, whether students are aware of placement expectations or not, university staff do need to be aware that students are not consistently *presenting* as being knowledgeable of a placement's expectations and therefore think through ways of making these even more explicit.

5.1.2.2 Communication between Link Tutors, Schools, Mentors and Mentees

Link Tutors being 'called in' when there is an issue to be dealt with can only heighten a student's perception that when a link tutor arrives in school that it carries negative connotations. This may account, in part, for students' emotional responses when their feedback from a link tutor is positive. The reaction may stem from an overwhelming feeling of relief. If schools were only contacting link tutors when there was a problem then there was no opportunity to share in a student's successes routinely. The university expected a student to check in with their link tutor once a week to submit that week's lesson observation grades but the onus was on the student to maintain this contact. Because this contact was around the submission of grades this again confined the link tutor's role to a monitoring one. It might be useful if link tutors were required to be more proactive in contacting students regularly to see how placement was progressing, not with the agenda of collecting grades or stepping in if there was a problem. This would help students to develop a more positive relationship with their link tutors and for link tutors to be able to have informed conversations with school-based mentors rather than waiting for a school-based mentor to report on progress. We need to move on from thinking that 'no news is good news' or the university will just be turned to when there is an issue and therefore our presence will always be seen, by the student, as something to be wary of.

An understanding of the role of the link tutor needs to be shared by all parties involved within the mentoring process. Students need to trust that their link tutor will respond to their concerns in a sensitive way if they are to contact them for support in challenging circumstances and a school needs to not feel 'betrayed' if a student asks for support from a

link tutor in those challenging circumstances. In the experience described earlier (p180) the school felt betrayed by the students and the students felt betrayed by the link tutor. The link tutor would have walked away, after having shared the concerns of the students, being unaware of the subsequent challenges faced by this group of students who were left to continue their placement. If students are not confident that a sensitive situation will be handled by their link tutor without them being subsequently disadvantaged, by sharing their concerns, then this would be a reason why they do not proactively not seek support from their link tutors.

5.1.2.3 Communication between Mentors and Mentees

On examination of these experiences, it was clear to see that there was significant tension surrounding feedback and being caught in the middle of tense relationships within school.

Mentees were uncomfortable being present when mentors constructed their feedback and some mentors were also uncomfortable in this position. As far as I am aware this issue had not been identified to date in the literature but it is a practice which seems to occur. Therefore, this is an aspect of feedback which needs to be explored further as it potentially impacts upon mentors and mentees being able to engage in the honest conversations needed (Hudson, 2016), about a mentee's performance, to maximise progress.

According to the mentees, mentors used a variety of strategies to avoid delivering challenging feedback, in particular, face to face. Presumably, this was because mentors found the scenario uncomfortable. Mentors would, for example, take documentation home to complete, out of sight of the mentee or leave completed feedback sheets on a table for a mentee to find, rather than give the sheets back to the mentees directly. This avoidant behaviour was difficult for mentees to deal with as they did not know quite how to deal with it given that they were not sure of the reasons why a mentor would do this. Mentees were not sure if their mentors were completing documentation out of their sight because they were uncomfortable or because they did not have the time available to them in school to complete the task. Both of those scenarios then caused mentees to feel unsettled. Mentees lost

confidence in mentors who were not comfortable to give them challenging feedback or if they were not sure of how to complete the paperwork. If the mentee thought that the mentor was completing feedback out of school because of time pressures, then the mentee felt as though they were a burden which situated them in an uncomfortable position. Consequently, this avoidant behaviour was at least counter-productive to the development of an open and honest relationship between mentor and mentee and at worst interpreted as disrespectful. These experiences resonated with Hudson's (2016a) stance that a respectful relationship between mentee and mentor is needed. A code of ethics may be useful to establish a shared understanding of what constitutes respectful practice. This is advocated by The International Standards for Mentoring Programmes in Employment (cited in Hobson et al., 2016, p15) with their sixth standard, relating to the maintenance of high standards of ethics and pastoral care:

- All parties have access to and understand the Code of Conduct & Ethics
- Performance against the Code of Conduct is monitored, and there are procedures for dealing with breaches of it
- Participants understand clearly the hierarchy of interests (mentee, mentoring pair, organisation) and have discussed the implications for managing relationships and the programme.

Mentors also cited being uncomfortable at the prospect of delivering a difficult message. However, this study suggests that mentees are desirous of honest feedback and so clearly there was a tension present here. Although this tension had already been identified in the literature (Beck and Kosnik (2002); Bullough (2005); Hudson (2016)) it has potentially been restricted to the idea that this is because mentors may feel 'impolite' (Beck and Kosnik, 2002), not wishing to cause offence (Bullough, 2005) or not wishing to overwhelm the mentee (Hudson, 2016) and consequently delivering honest feedback might jeopardise the mentoring relationship. This research identifies issues, beyond a mentor not wishing to cause offence or to overwhelm, relating to mentors themselves which explain their

reluctance to deliver honest, critical feedback. These issues related to a mentor being concerned with how a mentee's response may impact upon them, feeling a need to maintain their professional distance and, at times, to safeguard themselves. The mentors' need to safeguard themselves may be in part due to the performative culture (Ball, 2003) that they work in as it would not be in their interests to be seen to be lacking in any area of their professional competencies.

Giving feedback is clearly an aspect of managerial practice and consequently, within a school setting, it may only be staff with middle and senior leadership roles who are identified for any professional development in this area and yet there will be members of staff who are allocated a mentee who are not part of a school's management team. Mentor M7 (SA lines 100-102) stated 'it's important to be able to give feedback', by acknowledging that by being 'management' they knew how to do this suggested that they felt it was a skill which not all teachers would have but one which would require a further level of experience and training. Mentors would be reliant on the university's compulsory mentor training alone if their school had not taken up the university's offer of further mentor training. We can see, from both mentees' and mentors' experiences, of both delivering and receiving challenging feedback, in particular, that this is an area which any mentor needs to consider for further development, due to the need to deliver that feedback to ensure a mentee's progress. Hudson and Hudson's (2018) work identified conflict as an inherent issue within mentoring relationships. The giving of challenging feedback is identified in this study to be a catalyst for such conflict and is therefore an area to be addressed prior to an assessed placement experience to work to dissipate that tension from the outset.

Mentees reported feeling unsettled by being mentored by different people e.g., when working with teachers who were job-sharing. This was only raised in a negative light, when mentees felt that their mentors held differing views on their practice or what they should focus on next. Mentoring coming from a variety of individuals can be a positive experience (Higgins and Kram, 2001) as it can help mentees to develop their ability to reflect, rather

than mimic practice. However, mentees in this study did not seem to know who to follow when given differing advice, rather than seeing this as an opportunity to develop their own pedagogy and their ability to articulate it and thus defend it. As a provider, we could assist mentees in re-framing the idea of receiving different advice to prevent them from seeing it as something so negative. It may be confusing (Shute, 2008; Tilema and Smith, 2009), but it puts mentees into a position where they must engage with their own practice critically in deciding what to do next. Mentees would need to reflect upon that different advice as it created a space for them to shape their own practice rather than mould their practice to match that of another.

5.1.2.4 Communication between Provider, Mentees and Mentors

Mentors from both focus groups discussed the fact that they felt students can be focussed on the 'wrong' things and that they were not often genuinely focussed on the children but instead were too focussed on the tasks they had to complete to 'pass the course'. The mentors clearly felt that if students consistently focussed on the children, and their progress, that their own progress would follow naturally. This desire for students to be committed to children and their learning is in line with Hudson's (2013) findings and although this was not apparent in the mentors' list of desirable attributes for a mentee it was clearly important to them as discussion around this theme occurred in both focus groups, in response to an open question.

It is apparent that the university needs to ensure that schools are clear about a student's tasks and that schools are aware of the genuine need a student has to complete these successfully. Perhaps a way forward is to have greater input from partnership schools into the designing of placement tasks so that they might also feel some ownership of these tasks and that they are more easily integrated to the usual running of a classroom. There is a point to be made here that placement tasks need to be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are still relevant to current practice and effective in maximising a child's progress, that would prevent them from being viewed, by schools and students, as tasks merely to be 'ticked off'

by a student. New placement tasks, often responding to the latest government initiatives or priorities, have a tendency to be added to an existing list so there is an argument for task lists to be stripped out regularly to avoid this inadvertent lengthening.

5.1.2.5 Time

Mentees reported that mentors having too many students impacted upon their ability to mentor individuals effectively. If an alternative model of mentoring was considered at that point then having more than one student in a class could be used positively. Making use of the idea of relationship constellations (Higgins and Kram, 2001) and reflecting upon Ambrosetti et al.'s (2017) use of a triad model, where the more experienced student had a pivotal role to play in mentoring the less experienced student, then this scenario could have been re-framed for a positive outcome. A school requests student teachers for a placement but the university does not know which class these students will be placed with. The school is then relied upon to place students appropriately so that the number of students within a class would fit within the particular mentoring structure of that placement. As we have seen earlier (p171), feelings of trust between school and university was highlighted as important. This began with mentors making assumptions about the quality of the students being placed with them by the university: 'M4… you're trusting that the er university have sent you someone reliable, sensible, worthy of your class' (SA Mentors, M4, lines 151-152). In turn, it would be assumed that the university would make assumptions about how a school would place a student in terms of selecting a mentor with the time available to engage in the mentoring process. The uncomfortable truth that schools may be hosting placements to address internal staffing issues or to access a level of extra funding needs to be voiced here. The number of placements offered by a school could be carefully monitored by the provider and students' placement feedback should be considered in the light of that. In reality, however, a provider will not know the extent to which a school provides placements as a school can be working simultaneously with a range of providers. As a result, if one provider felt that a school was not working at capacity, they could not be sure that a school was not

hosting placements for other providers and therefore hosting well beyond a reasonable capacity to ensure quality mentoring experiences for all students with them.

5.1.3 Ways Forward

5.1.3.1 Accessing Documentation

In the main, mentors' suggestions about ways forward were around the access to placement documentation. However, it was clear that mentors were not consistent in accessing documentation already readily available to them. Consequently, making more information available to them would need to be thought through carefully. It might have been that mentors were not used to accessing the documentation online as some mentors made the point explicitly that they still liked to receive hard copies of placement documentation:

> M4 yes, and we got the handbook rather than just getting it electronically because I'm still a bit of a paper person, I'll like to mark it up on there and stuff.
>
> (SA lines 305-36)

As it was possible for a mentor to print out the documentation, or aspects of it, themselves if they wished to 'mark it up' the issue that they had would appear to be the fact that they did not receive it in hard copy in the first instance. If this is a reason why mentors do not access documentation, then the way forward would have to be around managing expectation and ultimately increasing their familiarity with electronic copies. The solution could not be to revert to supplying schools with paper copies as that would not make sense on several levels e.g. ecologically, efficiency of communication, having the ability to update documentation easily and communicate that to schools rapidly etc.

The fact that mentors were mostly concerned with how to access placement documentation indicated a limited understanding of the vital and complex role they were undertaking. Underlining this understanding was Mentor M12's explicit comments about training centring around practical aspects of placement and their reinforcement of the fact that that is what they thought training should be about:

> M12 Well, I'm guessing most of us have done some kind of mentor training and that's useful in terms of the admin side, the paperwork

> side of it, I mean no one, I don't think, can teach you how to observe a lesson, you do that through your own experience but there is so much paperwork, there are so many things a trainee has to comply with, you have to have an awareness of that so pre-training I think is vital erm.. I'm not sure other than that?
>
> (SB lines 241-245)

This made clear to me that there was a need to raise awareness in mentors of the complexity of the integral role they played in the development of a mentee's experience, skills and attributes in their journey to being a teacher.

5.2 Developing the Conceptual Framework to Underpin a Model of Mentoring

From the outset of the study, as discussed in the introduction, I knew that there were hidden aspects of mentoring which needed to be illuminated in order to be acknowledged and then considered in terms of preparing mentees more effectively for the process (see p10). I wanted to reflect on our current practices in the light of what I had found out and devise workable enhancements, or changes, to those to ensure that they were fit for purpose and effectively met the needs of our student teachers.

These were the significant findings which I identified as being within our reach to address more effectively:

- Student teachers had assumptions about how it would be to be mentored before the start of placement which often were not met and which therefore became a source of tension (2.3 Initial Expectations of the Mentoring Experience p37)
- Mentees and Mentors had ideals of how they should each be and they often each fell short of those ideals (4.2 The Ideal Mentee p137 and 4.3 The Ideal Mentor p150)
- Mentors and mentees used the same terminology freely, which also appears within mentoring guidance and discourse, but it became clear that understandings of this differed (4.4 Understandings of Support p153)
- Mentors were not regularly accessing placement documentation and so often were not aware of placement requirements (4.5.1.1 Communication of Placement Expectations p162)
- Mentees found feedback unsettling in terms of what was delivered and how it was delivered (4.5.1.4 Delivery and Receipt of Challenging Feedback p173)
- Mentors found challenging feedback difficult to give (4.5.1.4 Delivery and Receipt of Challenging Feedback p173)
- Mentors often did not have sufficient time available to them fulfil the requirements of the role of the mentor (4.5.2 Time p186)

A significant finding, resonating with mentoring literature that I felt we had limited influence over, were the clear power imbalances within the mentoring relationship. Mentors held the power within the process, given that they were routinely responsible for assessing students' progress. This power position affected all aspects of the mentoring process for the mentee and impacted upon each of the points above, to some degree. Fundamentally, I needed a framework which was informed by my study's findings, but which was pragmatic and workable. The context within which we work in ITE does put mentoring within the 'hierarchical and power relationships' which Hobson (2016) explicitly advised against within his ONSIDE model (see p76) as it is standard practice for student teachers to be assessed by their mentor (Lofthouse, 2018, p250). Consequently, a framework would need to acknowledge this and find ways to support mentees in operating successfully in that context.

Mentor preparation was focussed on mentors but not all mentors engaged with the training. Students' preparation for the mentoring process was largely focussed on the practical aspects of placement. It seemed to me that we were missing a significant opportunity in that as a provider we had access to at least one member of every mentoring relationship, the student teacher, but we were focussing all of our efforts on the mentors, who we often could not reach easily. We could prepare our student teachers much more effectively for the process of mentoring and if we did that then they could enter the mentoring process as informed participants, ready to engage with the process and able to take a more proactive role in ensuring its success. Preparing the mentees to a greater degree would immediately work some way to empowering them as they would be more informed about the process they were entering.

My findings resonated clearly with Hobson's (2016) stance in that the area of feedback fostered tension for both mentors and mentees and clearly had consequences for a mentoring relationship. However, Hobson's (2016) ONSIDE model (see p76) was beyond reach as it could not be wholly implemented given that we could not adhere to its first principle that mentoring must be offline (i.e. separated from line management or supervision)

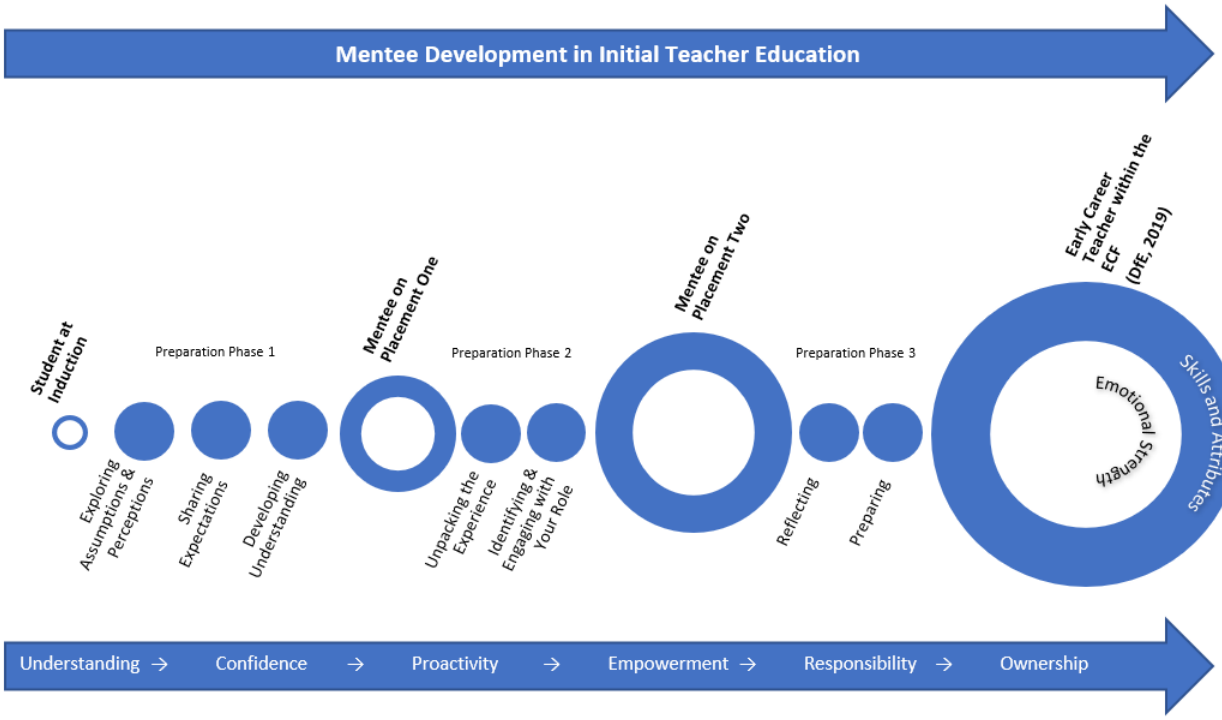
and non-hierarchical. This is not something which we could easily change as a provider but something that we would need to work with, my framework would be implemented within a mentoring structure where a mentor was responsible for assessing a mentee. Cochran et al.'s model (2017) (see p77) was also out of reach with one of their first principles being that a mentee would select their mentor and Cavanagh and King's (2019) model because of the assessing elements (see p79). Being pragmatic and accepting that the supervisory, assessing element of the process was embedded in ITE (Hobson and Malderez, 2013) I considered how we could be more supportive of mentees' wellbeing in that powerful context and consider their ability to be agentic in their own development. We needed to make clear to students the pivotal role that the mentoring relationship would have on their development and successful transition to being an effective teacher (Caruso, 2000) so it was crucial that they took an active role in ensuring its success. The first step would be to explore students' perceptions and assumptions around the mentoring process and compare those with the experiences of mentees who had gone before them to raise their awareness of the multiple realities of the experience. We would need to be explicit with students about what mentors expected from them, given that we know there is a 'distinct discrepancy between the perceptions of mentors and mentees regarding the nature of the mentoring experience' (Manning and Hobson, 2017, p1). Once they had that heightened awareness of differing expectations (Izadinia, 2016) and perceptions of experience then an understanding of the reality of mentoring could be explored, before they embarked on their first placement. The emotional nature of the process of being mentored would need to be addressed at this point too, in alignment with the work of Anderson and Shannon's (1988) Mentoring Model (see p58) and also Hobson's (2016) ONSIDE model (see p76), to alert student teachers to the prospect and thus normalise that for them. If we were then able to make explicit the possible areas of tension (Hudson and Hudson, 2018) as indicated by my study's findings, before they started on placement, then they would be more able to pre-empt them proactively and thus alleviate or dissipate them. We could also guide them in thinking through ways in which they could support their mentor in supporting them, given the impact of teachers' significant

workloads upon their ability to mentor (DfE, 2019e). The students would begin their initial placement with a more nuanced understanding of how it was to be mentored, and to mentor. Once they had had some experience of being mentored they would need time to reflect upon that and think about their own role to a greater degree, not only in terms of what 'to do' but in terms of 'how to be' (Stephen, 2010), in ensuring that the process was as positive as possible. This would develop students' understanding, confidence and proactivity in actively taking on the role of 'mentee', empowering a mentee in their role on their second placement experience, resonating with the aims of Hobson's (2016) ONSIDE model. After the second placement, they would need again to reflect upon their experience and use that to prepare for their role as an Early Career Teacher, ready to engage fully with the Early Career Framework (DfE, 2019). To make the most of their future mentoring experiences they would need to move to a position where they took more responsibility for the success of a mentoring relationship and a greater degree of ownership of it. If they reached that point they would be ready to take an active role in transformative practice, in a model such as Lofthouse's (2015, cited in Lofthouse, 2018) (see p74).

I began to visualise the framework as a spiral, with different markers of an ITE programme mapped against it, however, this would not facilitate the pace of growth and development needed. ITE programmes are fast-paced and full of content, consequently the framework could not provide for frequent re-visiting of aspects. Although this may be beneficial my framework would have to be workable and time pressures would not allow for this level of re-visiting. I needed something which clearly demonstrated the significant development of a mentee, informed by Hobson's (2016) ONSIDE model (see p76), in a relatively short space of time. Something with more powerful direction which illustrated how we could equip our students with the skills and attributes of a proactive mentee ready to take on the rest of their career in teaching was required. Initially, this took me to visuals of arrows and rockets, on upward trajectories. I was concerned that the rocket imagery, with upward trajectory, might trivialise what I was wanting to communicate and felt that arrows portrayed too clinical and

simplistic a stance, when we were discussing ‘people’ in this process. I then used circles to represent the human aspect ie the student teachers. I selected circles because to me they indicate strength, continuity, being representational of something protective around the student and something to be protected. The continuous form of the circle appealed to me and they also indicated strength from within, in addition to being able to withstand external pressure. I had been inspired by Ambrosetti et al.’s (2017) Holistic Mentoring Model (see p70) where they used a set of nested circles in their mentoring model, the mentoring relationship was at the centre of the inner circle, fundamental to the process. However, I did not want the circles to be static and so the circles would expand throughout the framework to illustrate visually a mentee’s development in terms of not only their skills and attributes but their emotional strength too. I tried to plot the circles along a programme timeline, to map students’ progress to it. I did not want to make the timeline match a particular programme but rather ‘an’ ITE programme as they all have the similar structure of at least two assessed block placements with some spacing between them to indicate that the framework could be transferable to any ITE programme. The student would be represented by the circles described by enclosing curved lines, the representation of growing ‘space’ within those lines represented a student’s expanding potential. The university input would be represented by solid circles on the timeline, the areas within the curved enclosing lines. The solid circles did not grow as they would be representative of distinct episodes of university-based input, clear points which would anchor a student to their programme. After many iterations, this was the first framework wholly constructed that I felt represented what I needed it to:

Figure 31: First Iteration: V1 Conceptual Framework to Underpin a Model of Mentoring (Appendix 17)

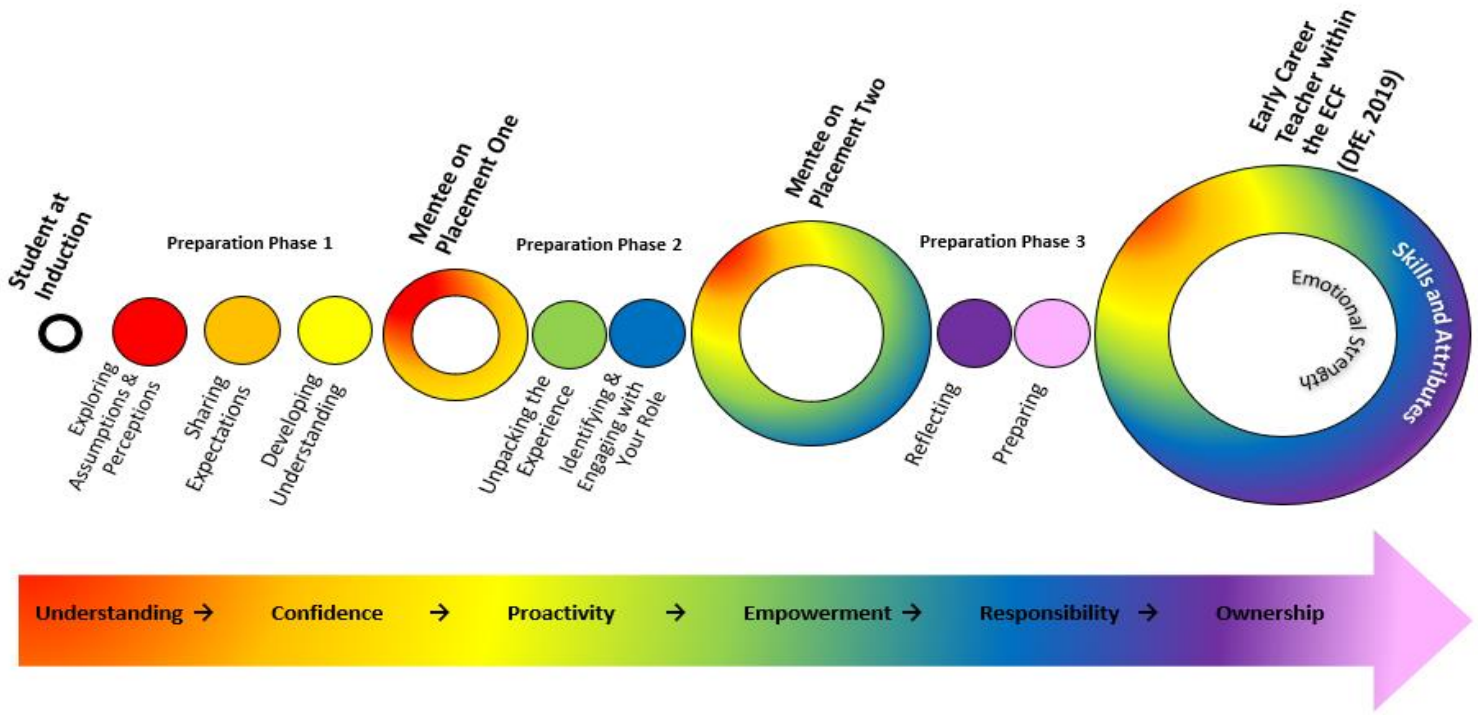


This did what it needed to 'functionally' but it was perhaps instantly forgettable as it had a corporate 'SmartArt' feel to it, although I had used that application I had not made my model fit a given structure, I had used elements of SmartArt to do what I needed them to do for me but the overall result was not sufficiently 'impactful'. At this point I was comfortable with the framework's structure but it needed to be visually more engaging. I began by altering colours but this indicated that each aspect was separate and I need to portray the fact that this was a developmental model, rather than a sequence of unrelated aspects sitting next to each other. Consequently, I knew that colour had to *develop* and I knew that the 'student circles' had to be connected in that way. At this point, I returned to the model which represented my methodological approach (Figure 13, p107), in this model I, as a researching professional, was shining a white light into the dark space of mentoring experiences. The process of inquiry led to a refraction of this light, illustrated by the spectrum emanating from the dark space. I decided to use this set of colours to enhance the first iteration of my conceptual framework. The first circle which represented the student at the outset of the programme

was black to indicate their set of personal assumptions about how it would be to be mentored. The colour would change from black to reflect the shift in a student's personal assumptions and then build from student circle to student circle, until at last the student circle would be complete, incorporating the entire spectrum. The university provision would be made up of the distinct and separate colours of the spectrum, illustrating that they contributed to the whole and informed the next student circle but again, being solid, they represented stability and specific markers on a programme. I began with red and moved through to violet, to mirror the order in which they would be dispersed when light is refracted. As a student moved through the spectrum their practice would become increasingly honed, gathering the colours as they progressed. The arrow underneath underlined the mentee's increasing strength, attributes and skills across the programme until they reached the point where they felt a significant level of responsibility for, and ownership of, the process. I had removed the arrow from the top of the model as I felt this inserted a 'ceiling' on the model and it felt compressed whilst I wanted it to appear freer and less limiting.

The framework would subsequently sit at the side of Hobson's (2016) ONSIDE model as an alternative if a student teacher was in a position where their mentor was also their assessor. It would then foreground Figure 9: Lofthouse's (2015, cited in Lofthouse, 2018) practice development-led model for individual professional learning and institutional growth through mentoring (see p74), acting as a stepping stone for mentees used to working within more traditional supervisory ITE mentoring models (Hobson and Malderez, 2013) (see 2.1 Context of Mentoring within 'provider led ITT' (DfE, 2019), p32). The result was a conceptual framework (see Figure 32: V2 Conceptual Framework to Underpin a Model of Mentoring, p218) designed to empower student teachers to be able to engage with individual professional learning and institutional growth through mentoring. It would empower students by facilitating the development of the necessary skills, attributes and emotional strength to be able to engage in Lofthouse's (2015, cited in Lofthouse, 2018) model, promoting transformational practice.

Figure 32: V2 Conceptual Framework to Underpin a Model of Mentoring



Mentee Development in Initial Teacher Education

Chapter Six: Conclusion

6.1 Addressing the research questions

The aims of the study were to:

- explore the mentor-student relationship within assessed school-based placements on a University-based ITE provider's (University X) Initial Teacher Education Programmes, in the northeast of England
- identify and explore the features of what students, and school-based mentors, perceive to be effective mentoring
- identify the barriers to effective mentoring
- develop a conceptual framework, emerging from the data, which would underpin a model of mentoring to support students in the mentoring process and in turn support mentors in achieving 'mentor standards' (TSC, 2016)

the following two key research questions were initially identified which framed the research:

- What happens when students are mentored?
- How do mentors support students effectively in becoming competent teachers?

After two initial focus group discussions with students, a second set of research questions were developed, to explore the specific themes emerging from that first wave of data collection which would address the research project's aims:

- What do mentors and students perceive to be effective support for students making the transition to teacher?
- What do mentors and students understand about the role of the mentor?
- What do mentors consider to be the desirable attributes of a mentee?
- What do students consider to be the desirable attributes of a mentor?
- What aspects of the mentoring process do students and mentors find challenging?
- What do students do to ensure that the mentoring experience is positive?

6.1.1 The Mentoring Context

To clarify understanding of the context in which the mentoring processes were taking place it was necessary to examine the established mentoring process in the light of literature in the field. The literature review suggested that the mentoring process was designed in a way which created a fundamentally 'anti-mentoring' (Malderez, 2015) context from the outset. The aspects which fostered an anti-mentoring context related to how mentors were allocated

to students, the time available to mentors and the established protocols for assessing students' competencies.

Students were allocated to schools, by the provider, based on geographical location and the students' personal profiles, whilst adhering to strict DfE criteria (2020c). It has been recognised that it is a challenge for providers to be able to secure teaching placements for their students (Lofthouse, 2018). Thus, it would have been challenging to be rigorously selective of mentors, given that placements were difficult to source to begin with. Although careful selection of mentors is understood to be fundamental to effective mentoring practices (Yusko & Feiman-Nemser, 2008) there were complexities and challenges evident, with regard to sourcing placements, which would therefore impact significantly on any ability to select carefully. Once a student was allocated to a school then the school took responsibility for selecting the mentor. As there were strict requirements to adhere to in terms of, for example, which age group that student needed to be allocated to, then clearly it would be unlikely that a mentor could be carefully selected by a primary school as there would be a limited number of teachers working with particular year groups. Once a student had been allocated to a school the school paired the student with a mentor, ordinarily prior to the student's arrival on placement. Specific matching of mentor to mentee, is understood to be central to an effective mentoring relationship (Ambrosetti, 2014; Hobson, 2016; Wang, 2001) but this was not something which was feasible in a context where mentors were not plentiful.

A teacher's workload is already significant before mentoring a student teacher (DfE, 2018) and there is clear evidence that teachers are subject to significant pressures of time (DfE, 2019e; Hobson et al. 2016; Hudson, 2016). Guidance was produced by the government to suggest ways in which teachers could reduce their workload (DfE, 2018b), however, the mentoring of students was not considered in this guidance. As mentoring a student teacher was not considered within that guidance then either mentoring student teachers was not a sufficiently significant priority for a teacher to be included or it was not deemed to be an aspect of a teacher's workload which was time consuming. In addition to the implicit

message that mentoring would not be a teacher's priority it has been made explicit that a teacher's priority must be the progress of the children (DfE, 2011). However, within those placements there is a heavy workload (Ambrosetti, 2014, p227), not only associated with students needing to know what to do but also how to do it (DfE, 2011; Stephen, 2010) and placements are within tight timescales, usually 10 weeks at most so the period is intense. Running alongside this we know that teachers work within a 'regime of governance' which 'introduces direct relations between performance and pay and greater precarity of employment' (Ball, 2017, p218) but as performance in mentoring students is not a measure of effectiveness then mentoring activity is not a sphere of activity which is likely to be invested in by school managers (Ball, 2003). Clearly, teachers have distinct time constraints associated with attending effectively to the core aspects of their practice, they must keep their children's progress as their focus, and they are under significant pressure to perform in this respect. Consequently, teachers have little time available to devote to the mentoring of their students and even then, their priority within that would be to maintain their children's progress.

Students were assessed by their mentors whilst on placement and there is evidence (Hobson & Malderez, 2013, p90) to suggest that this, at the very least, compromises the mentoring relationship (Hobson, 2016). Clutterbuck (2004, p13) goes as far as to define mentoring as being 'off-line' and whilst Yusko and Feiman-Nemser (2008, p923) found that a mentor being responsible for assessment of their mentee would not prevent mentors from forming trustworthy relationships with their mentees they did, however, state that it could make it more challenging. Hobson and McIntyre (2013) found that a mentor also being assigned the role of assessor does prevent a mentee from asking for help from them because they are worried that this will discredit them as they expose their perceived ignorance. Thus, the fact that the mentor was also the assessor would make it, at the very least, more difficult for a mentee to ask for their mentor's help. Within Primary ITE the role of mentor is usually taken by one person, because of the nature of primary education where

one teacher usually takes responsibility of one class. Consequently, a student would often be mentored and assessed by the same person for much of the time which would only exacerbate any impact of 'judgementoring' (Hobson and Malderez, 2013, p90) on the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship.

For a mentoring process to be effective in this context it would be despite the established processes. A student would need to be placed in a school which believed that the mentoring of students was ultimately beneficial to their children to allow a mentor to feel as though they were able to devote time to the process, within their school's performative culture. Once there, a student could certainly expect to be allocated a mentor who was a skilled and experienced teacher (TSC, 2016) but they would be fortunate to be allocated a mentor who also had the desirable dispositions (see pp 32-35) for mentoring espoused by Anderson and Shannon (1988). As the mentor would also be taking on the role of assessor then it would also be auspicious if they were able to display the personal attributes that would allow mentees to reflect openly and honestly with them (Hudson and Hudson, 2018, p17).

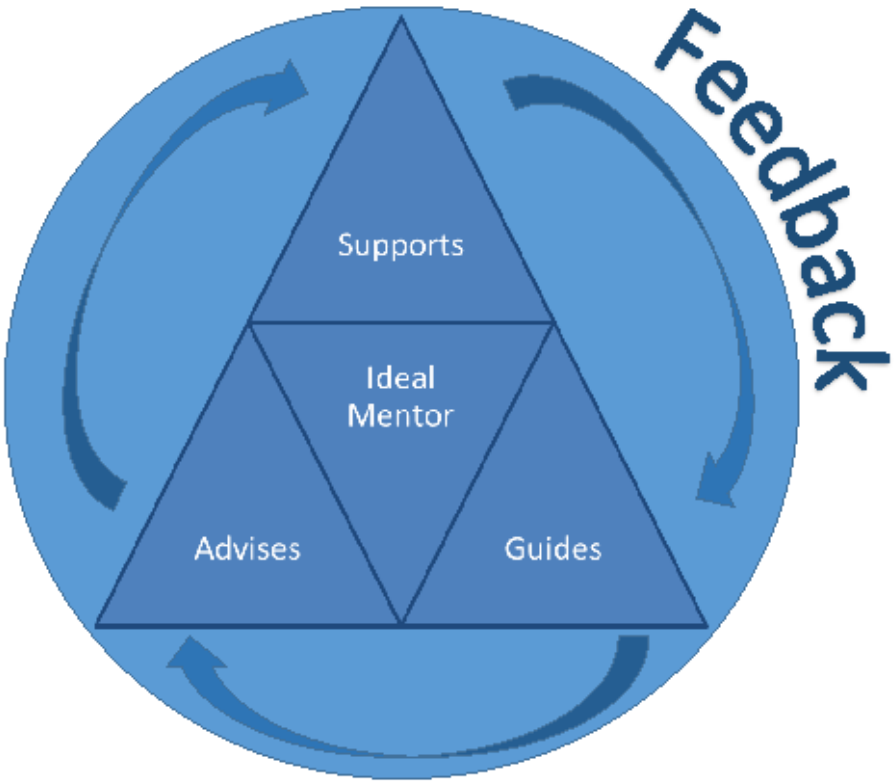
Once the mentoring process was underway the practical activities that student teachers and mentors engaged in across placements, such as lesson observations and weekly reviews of progress, were mainly in line with the university's guidance and requirements. However, it became apparent that there was a hidden aspect to the process in that those activities were implemented differently, with subsequently different implications for the participants. What was put in place was more consistent that how it was put in place, for example, students were given feedback about their practice but how they were given feedback differed. These resulting implications then often created areas of tension within the mentoring relationships.

6.1.2 Effective Support, the Role of the Mentor and Desirable Attributes of a Mentor

The findings from this study were that participants' perceptions of the attributes of the ideal mentor were associated with feedback, support, guidance and advice. This is broadly in line with previous findings (Davis and Fantozzi, 2016; Hobson et al. 2009; Hudson, 2016;

Izadinia, 2016). However, it became apparent that there were multiple understandings of support so that mentees would use the term ‘support’ to mean practical support and/or emotional support, they could also view one action as supportive or unsupportive. For instance, one student might view a teacher leaving them alone to teach unobserved as supportive (BA59; PG37; PG55) but another as unsupportive (PG56; PG58; PG94). As students cited ‘feedback’ as the most important thing that a mentor could do for them and also highlighted support, guidance and advice then this would suggest that they would like feedback to be delivered in a supportive, advisory and guiding way. Figure 33: Attributes of The Ideal Mentor, p223, was then constructed to illustrate the mentees’ ideal mentor.

Figure 33: Attributes of The Ideal Mentor



Although the mentors all highlighted support as being one of the most important things they could do for a mentee it became apparent in their discussions that they were happy to provide practical support and were prepared to offer emotional support too but there was an

indication that if they needed to give this then that was a signal that things were not going well. Mentees felt that they should be supported emotionally too but did suggest that needing emotional support might be a sign that they were failing. Consequently, the lack of clarity surrounding the terms frequently used within the mentoring process meant that there was considerable scope for misunderstandings and then feelings of resentment could be fostered as participants in the process felt that their mentors and mentees were not doing the right things.

6.1.3 Desirable Attributes of a Mentee

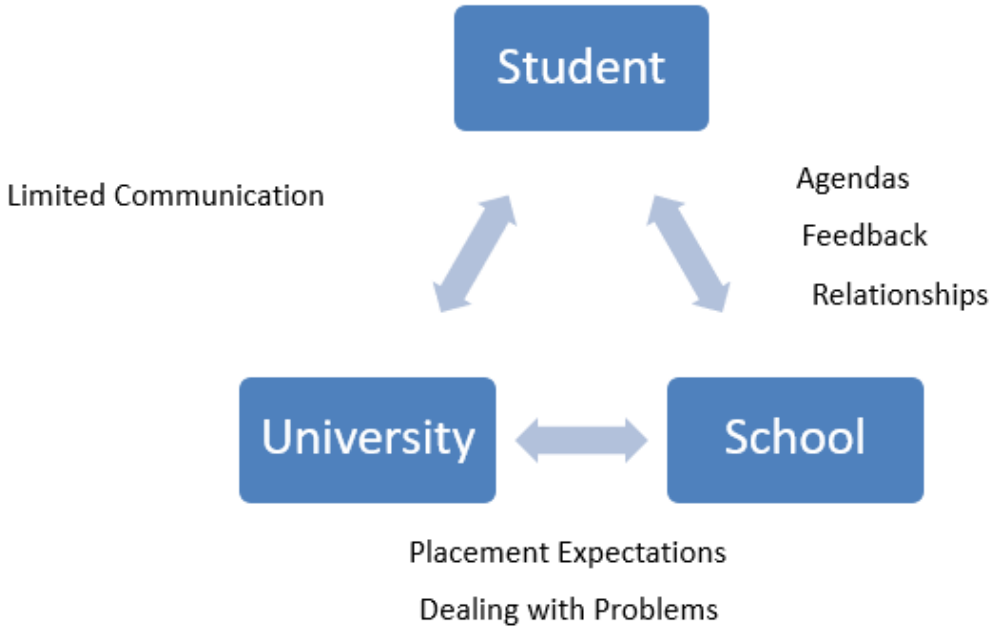
Mentors had high expectations of their mentees. From the outset mentors were looking for their mentees to be organised and well-prepared; they wanted their mentees to be conversant with placement expectations and to be ready to support them in navigating the placement documentation. Mentors were looking for their mentees to be professional. Mentors wanted mentees to be aware that whatever was happening in their personal life should not impact upon their teaching persona. Mentors wanted their mentees to be aware of when and how to communicate appropriately with staff within a school setting. They expected their mentees to be wholly committed to the teaching profession and to have the interests of their children at heart. Mentors wanted their mentees to be proactive in terms of asking questions and also in terms of using initiative and contributing positively to a staff team. Mentors felt that their mentees needed to be open to taking feedback positively and to taking suggestions on board. Encompassing all of these attributes was a desire for mentees to be emotionally strong; mentors wanted their mentees to have a secure self-esteem and confidence, see Figure 34, p225.

Figure 34: Attributes of The Ideal Mentee

6.1.4 Challenging Aspects of the Mentoring Process

The tensions arising from the data, (See Figure 35, p226), were inextricably linked with 'communication' in some way, in line with Izadinia (2016, p398) who found that 'an open line of communication' was a key element of a positive mentoring relationship.

Figure 35: An overview of the tensions within the mentoring relationship



6.1.4.1 Issues Identified between Students and Mentor/Schools

As outlined in Figure 36 below, the tensions between students and mentors radiated from three areas: agendas, feedback and relationships. Students would typically have tasks to attend to across the course of their placements. Mentors felt that students were too focussed on those tasks i.e., their own agendas, and that if they were more focussed on the progress and wellbeing of their children, then their own progress in the art of teaching would follow. Students felt that their tasks were often not given enough attention by their mentors which consequently led to students feeling that their work was undervalued. Feedback was also an area which could elicit much tension. Mentors discussed the challenges associated with delivering challenging feedback whilst students declared that they were looking for open and honest feedback, but they were aware that their mentors found this difficult. Mentors cited some dynamics being difficult to negotiate e.g. being a female mentor with a male student had caused issues for some and a younger mentor being allocated an older mentee.

Students did not raise any issues related to gender or age, but they did discuss the difficulties associated with being caught up in tense relationships between colleagues within school or between school and university colleagues.

Figure 36: Issues identified between students and mentors/schools

Issues identified between students and mentors/schools	
Students' Issues	Mentors' Issues
Agendas	
Mentors do not respect the work they have to do	Students are focussed on the wrong things
Feedback	
Mentors do not deliver challenging messages but 'sugar coated criticism' Mentors sometimes feedback publicly	Find delivering challenging feedback difficult
Relationships	
Being caught in the middle of tense relationships within school School/mentor – link tutor - student	A mentee being older than themselves Female mentors having male mentees

6.1.4.2 Issues Identified between University and Mentors/Schools

As outlined in Figure 37 below, tensions between the university and schools could arise from placement expectations and when there were specific problems to deal with. Students began placement assuming that mentors would have accessed and be familiar with placement documentation and therefore would be aware of the placement's expectations. What students found, however, was that mentors had often not accessed documentation and so were not aware of expectations. Conversely, mentors felt that mentees should take more of a role in informing them about placement expectations. Mentors also said that they would value more information prior to the start of a placement but we know from the students that

they do not often access the documentation which is already sent to them. When problems arose which a student felt required intervention from the university, students found that this would put them in an uncomfortable position. Students reported mentors feeling betrayed by a student contacting the university and students felt that link tutors handled a situation badly which resulted in an issue being exacerbated once the link tutor had left. Mentors discussed issues around feeling pressurised to pass a student's placement in some cases.

Figure 37: Issues identified between university and mentors/schools

Issues identified between university and mentors/schools	
Students' Issues	Mentors' Issues
Placement expectations	
Mentors not accessing documentation Mentors not knowing the purpose of their placement	Mentors expecting mentees to be knowledgeable about expectations Mentors wanting more information
Dealing with Problems	
Link tutors responding to their concerns but subsequently handling an issue in such a way as to make the situation more difficult for them at school	Feeling pressurised to pass a student's placement

6.1.4.3 Issues Identified between Students and University

As seen in Figure 38 below, mentors did not raise any issues related to communication between school and university. This might have been due to a limitation of the study, mentors knew they were talking to a member of university staff and so the assumption would be here that they would perhaps be reluctant to voice any concerns in case the relationship between their school and University X would be compromised (Potts, 2000) in any way. Mentees raised the issue of link tutors not responding quickly enough if they requested support from them.

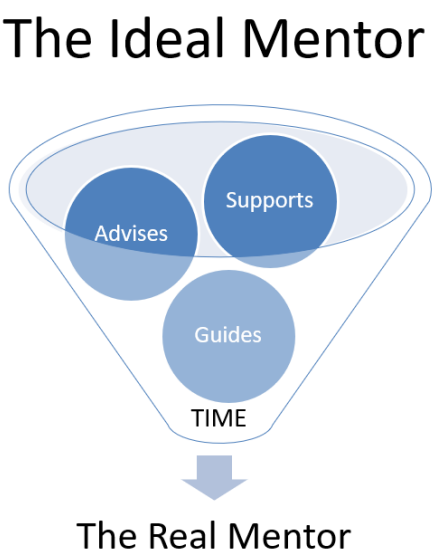
Figure 38: Issues identified between students and university

Issues identified between students and university	
Students' Issues	Mentors' Issues
Limited Communication	
Link tutors not responding swiftly enough to their communications	None raised

The investigation into how mentors supported students highlighted that the term 'support' was used frequently by both mentors and mentees. However, the term was perceived in multiple ways and there were also discrepancies in how much of that support was deemed to be appropriate by participants. Consequently, a student's definition of 'support' might be different to their mentor's and this might be the basis of misunderstanding in the relationship and impact on effectiveness of the process. The lack of an explicit shared understanding worked against the construction of a positive relationship between a mentor and a mentee in some cases. It is vital that there is explicit shared understanding of not only expectations but the terms commonly used with the mentoring process to work against the anti-mentoring context and foster the development of constructive relationships.

6.1.4.4 Time: The Constriction of The Ideal Mentor

Figure 39: Time: The Constriction of The Ideal Mentor



Student teachers were looking for support, guidance, and advice from their mentors, they also expected that their mentor would want to mentor them. During the process students became acutely aware that mentoring was time consuming for mentors (see Figure 39, p230) who were already managing significant workloads, this caused stress and discomfort as they became reluctant to approach their mentors for support.

Mentors felt that they were there to 'support' their mentees but it became apparent that there were multiple understandings of what it meant 'to support'. Mentors did not cite time as an area of tension within the mentoring process nor did they report not wanting to mentor a student. I believed this to be evidence of one of the study's limitations (see p242) in that I felt I needed to be careful of accepting research participants' accounts as full and wholly factual in my role as an education researcher (Hobson and McIntyre, 2013).

6.1.4.5 What Aspects of the Mentoring Process do Students and Mentors find Challenging?

Issues that students and mentors found challenging about the mentoring process were outlined in Figure 17: Issues within the mentoring relationship and most of these centred around issues relating to 'communication', as discussed previously. One issue was raised which was not investigated thoroughly, the issues raised which related to 'paired' placements. The reasons for not investigating that issue was two-fold. The issue was largely related to students' relationships with one another, rather than their mentors, and so was not tightly aligned with the focus of the research. In addition, I used my intuition, my 'extra-rational ways of knowing, honed from experience' (Ryan, 2015, p37), to discard this theme as I suspected that it had arisen from the recent introduction of paired placements and students were not at the point yet of realising the benefits of paired placements.

6.1.4.6 What do Students do to Ensure that the Mentoring Experience is Positive?

Referring to Figure 26: What did students do to ensure their experience of mentoring was positive?:

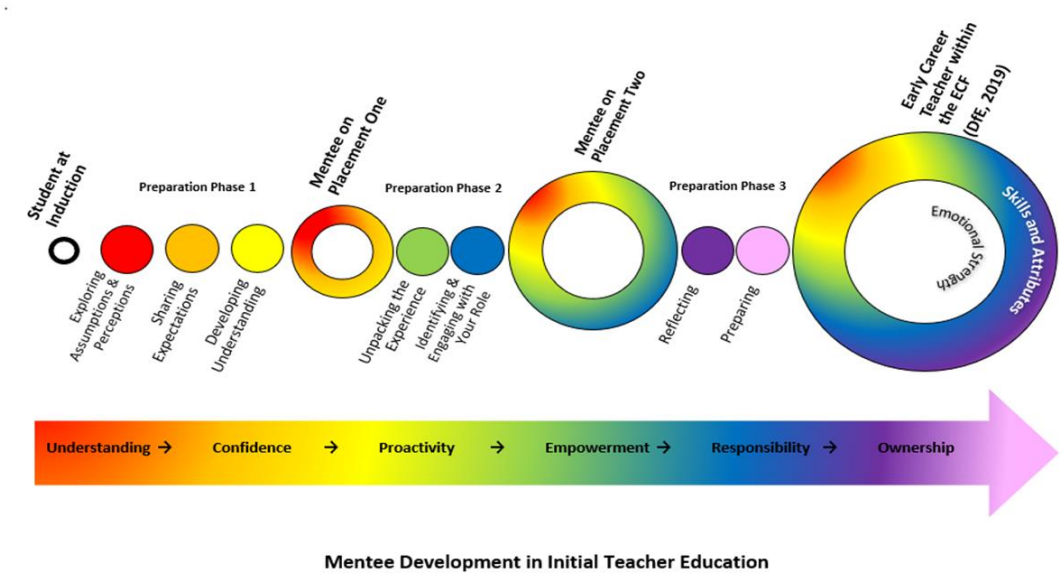
In terms of ensuring that the mentoring experience was positive students generally cited taking a passive response. Indeed, given that the word 'student' did not feature in the list of students' 25 most frequently used words (Figure 22, p152) then they cannot have thought that they were an important part of the process. In effect, mentees did what they felt they could to help their mentors with their roles so that they were not seen as a burden or an irritant.

6.2 Addressing the Study's Aims

As stated within Chapter One: Introduction (see p22), the conceptual framework (Figure 32, p218) was constructed after exploring the mentor-student relationship within assessed school-based placements on University X's Initial Teacher Education Programmes. The features of what students, and school-based mentors, perceived to be effective mentoring were identified, explored and the barriers to effective mentoring clarified. In identifying the barriers to effective mentoring, the study illuminated potential areas for tension and the conceptual framework was designed to alleviate some of those. This built on the work of Hudson and Hudson (2018, p19) who said that 'attempting to pinpoint where tensions occur in mentoring relationships may assist to more effectively target those areas prior to commencing professional experiences.' The study's findings directly informed the construction of the conceptual framework, designed to target those identified areas of tension prior to students embarking on their placement experiences. This conceptual framework (Figure 32, p218, replicated below), emerging from the data, underpins a model of mentoring to support all participants in the process thus ensuring as effective a process as possible.

6.2.1 Conceptual Framework to Underpin a Model of Mentoring (Appendix 18)

Figure 32: V2 Conceptual Framework to Underpin a Model of Mentoring, (see p218 for full size)



This conceptual framework is underpinned by the rationale that preparation for the process of mentoring was focussed too heavily on the mentors and what their responsibilities were during the process. My research highlights that mentors want mentees to be pro-active, but it also suggests that mentees are working in a particular context which disempowers them and consequently they are largely unable to be proactive. The mentoring process is constructed in a way which creates an 'anti-mentoring' context from the outset and the provider has little control over many of those aspects, as discussed in the literature review chapter (see p79). There needs to be a shift of focus so that the provider invests more of their input in the areas which they are able to influence more readily and which consequently make a difference to the quality of the mentoring process. The provider has access to every student who is about to be mentored and therefore they should be investing more thought to the preparation of

the mentees to have a greater impact on the quality of the mentoring process. This stance would be supported by Hudson's (2016a, p41) view,

> Indeed, just as mentors can engage in mentoring programs to advance their practices, mentees will also require education about desirable attributes and practices that they can draw upon to aid in forming and sustaining productive mentoring relationships.

If the provider can broaden their attention to include mentees to a greater degree then the aspects highlighted by the mentors as being desirable can be addressed prior to placement. This is preferable to mentees trying to pick up these ideas in an ad hoc fashion as they grapple with their placement experiences whilst ruminating about what they think their mentor's expectations are. If the focus of 'mentor training' is broadened to include students to a greater degree this would instantly go some way to mentees understanding that they have a significant role to play in the success and effectiveness of their mentoring experiences. The mentors, in this study, by implication, controlled the process. Mentor training was focussed on the mentor, who also took the role of assessor, and so consequently the power balance was such that they could not be perceived as anything other than in control of the process by the mentee. There needs to be a much greater emphasis on preparing students to be mentored, beyond the practicalities of what time to arrive, what to wear and being aware of needing to contribute to the tea fund. Preparation of this nature contributes to the notion of compliance and thus a re-affirming of the accepted power imbalance. Students need to feel able to be a proactive partner in the process, rather than a passive receiver of wisdom. They also need to be empowered to the point where they would feel able to participate in an open and honest discussion with a mentor, to question them about their practice for instance, without being perceived as being critical or disrespectful by their mentor. This framework facilitates that perspective shift, building on the work of Hudson (2016a) and also that of Hobson et al. (2016, p8) who advised that mentoring schemes could be strengthened by 'Providing preparation activities for mentees designed to help them make the most of mentoring, and to have realistic expectations of mentoring'. This study builds on the work of Hudson (2016a) and Hobson et al. (2016) by

pinpointing what the foci of those preparation activities need to be, in each phase of the student's transition to teacher.

This conceptual framework has three preparation phases, each building on the students', and then mentees', prior experiences and preparing them for the next mentoring experience.

Preparation Phase 1 of the framework would be led by the provider, given that none of the students would have had experience of being mentored in the role of student teacher at that point. At induction, students will have sets of assumptions about, and perceptions of, the mentoring process. Often these perceptions are not helpful as they can, for example, stem from unrealistic expectations of mentors and consequently they become misconceptions. The multiple understandings of some of the fundamental terms and concepts inherent in the process of mentoring can also set the scene for confusion, as participants assume that others share the same understandings. Students' initial assumptions and perceptions about what it means to be mentored as a student teacher need to be explored so that they become explicitly aware of what their own expectations are at that point. Once explored then the provider needs to outline the reality of mentoring a student teacher, from a mentor's perspective and share with them mentors' expectations of them. Mentoring terminology needs to be explored too so that, at the very least, students become aware of the ensuing implications of simple yet fundamental misunderstandings. Preparation Phase 1 will ensure that students will have addressed their perceptions of the mentoring process, developed a clear understanding of the mentor's role and of the challenges they face in enacting that role effectively, along with an awareness of the multiple interpretations of the terminology commonly used, before embarking on their first placement.

Preparation Phase 2 of the framework will be facilitated by the provider but the expectation is that mentees' experiences of being mentored on Placement 1 would constitute the basis for this phase, thus balancing the responsibility between provider and mentee. Students would be helped by the provider to unpack their own mentoring experiences, discuss those constructively with their peers and be encouraged to think about what their own role was in

their placement outcome. The role of the mentee would be the focus of pre-Placement 2 preparation, students would consider how they needed to be and what they needed to do to ensure that their next mentoring experience was as constructive as possible. In this way students would be encouraged to take greater responsibility for the success of their mentoring experience and drive that process from within.

Preparation Phase 3 of the framework would be mentee led as they reflected upon their accrued mentoring experiences and constructed their targets for the first transition point into their NQT year. At this point students would be experienced mentees, in the context of Primary ITE, and have a clear understanding of the contribution a constructive mentoring experience makes to their professional development and wellbeing. They would have had the opportunity to reflect honestly upon their own strengths and areas for development and be encouraged to work proactively to address these to ensure the most positive future mentoring experiences, whether as a mentee or as a mentor.

Moving from provider-led to mentee-led preparation, across the three phases, mirrors the shift that students need to make from developing an initial understanding of the process to ultimately taking ownership of their individual mentoring experiences as they make the transition from student to Early Career Teacher. If NQTs exit programmes having been encouraged, and expected, to take a proactive role in mentoring processes then they, in turn, will become mentors who expect their mentees to be proactive. This would mean that they would be mentors who were more comfortable with mentees asking them searching questions, without them feeling as though they were being criticised by their mentees and taking up defensive positions. Mentees will be empowered to affect small-step changes from within the process, from individual mentoring relationship to individual mentoring relationship. The empowerment of the mentee takes some inspiration from Reverse Mentoring where the traditional mentoring relationships, consisting of older, senior colleagues providing guidance to their younger, junior counterparts (Kram, 1985), are reversed. I am not advocating a full role reversal where a student teacher mentors an

experienced teacher as that would not meet the needs of either the novice teacher or the mentor in the context of ITE. However, I am advocating that the mentoring processes within ITE need to recognise to a greater degree that ‘knowledge is not a one-way street and that it is in everyone’s best interest to share expertise’ (Greengard, 2002, p15). With that in mind, the student teacher could take responsibility for some key aspects of the process, to empower them and also lessen the mentor’s workload. As an example, the mentors in this study found it difficult to get to grips with the placement documentation. The study’s student teachers often noted that their mentors were not familiar with the documentation and therefore the expectations of the placement. This would be an aspect of the mentoring process for which student teachers could take responsibility. Student teachers would be expected to take their mentors through placement documentation at the outset of their placements thus giving them a proactive stance from the start and a role in ensuring that their mentors were conversant with placement expectations. I believe that we need to work to find some mechanism to reduce the power imbalance in student teacher and mentor relationships to allow those being mentored to adopt a more proactive role. Expecting the mentees to take greater responsibility for the success of the mentoring relationship would be a way of doing this. It would be reciprocally supportive to delegate aspects of the workload associated with mentoring to mentees as this would support their mentors in supporting them. This approach would foster more opportunities for mentors and mentees to work together and therefore would foster the development of a collegiate relationship which would strengthen the mentoring relationship as a whole as Marcinkus-Murphy (2012, p566) noted that

> As with most workplace initiatives, fostering good reverse mentoring relationships requires thoughtful planning and attention. The more that the dynamics of formal mentoring relationships mimic informal relationships, the more successful they should be in terms of support exchanged, participant satisfaction and evaluations of program effectiveness.

6.2.2 Limitations of the Conceptual Framework to Underpin a Model of Mentoring

The conceptual framework does have limitations which need to be acknowledged and considered. The limitations are as a result of the ITE context in which the framework sits. These contextual aspects are beyond the scope of the model to change but they exert pressure on the mentoring process. These limitations relate to the notion of power (Hobson, 2016), the status of mentoring within schools (Valencia, Martin, Peace and Grossman, 2009; Wilson, 2014), the performative work culture (Lofthouse and Thomas, 2014) that teachers find themselves in and the time available to school-based educators to mentor (DfE, 2019e).

The framework does not attempt to change the current style of mentoring practices per se, it is intended as a framework which *underpins* a model of mentoring. Mentors will still be responsible for assessing mentees, thus distinct power imbalances will still be at play within the process. Although the model does not have the ability to change the powerful relationship it makes this relationship explicit and by exposing it allows mentees to prepare more effectively for it and to work positively within it.

Although pivotal to a student teacher's success (Caruso, 2000), an uncomfortable truth is that it is seen in the study's findings that the status of mentoring student teachers is not high within our schools. This is illustrated by the fact that a teacher's competence against the mentor standards (TSC, 2016) is not formally monitored (Jerome and Brook, 2020). We also know that mentors do not regularly access placement documentation prior to a student teacher's arrival and they often find it challenging to allocate the time required to mentor effectively. If the role was high status then this would not be the case. Although the model is situated in such a context it works to deal with this openly. By encouraging students to take a more proactive role in the process, the area of tension which is apparent around the time available to a mentor to engage in the process would be alleviated. It is important to consider at this point *how* the framework could be implemented, in addition to *what* would be implemented by it. As an example, current practice, at University X, is for Link Tutors to

introduce mentors to key aspects of a placement during the early stages of a placement. This meeting takes place in school without the student teacher being present. Aside from this being a significant investment of time, this works to exacerbate the power imbalance between mentor and mentee as it effectively excludes the mentee from hearing what the mentor is told about placement. Each link tutor makes an individual journey to each school. An inadvertent result of this is that mentors in different schools receive this information at different times, impacting upon when they have the knowledge to engage in the process as effectively as possible. Students talking with each other may feel disadvantaged if a peer's mentor has already received their training whilst theirs has not. This structure also results in a student teacher making assumptions about what a mentor knows about the placement as they would not part of this meeting, given that they are not invited to attend. A more open and equal way to prepare participants for the process would be to prepare them for some key aspects together and then each knows what information the other has, at the same time. This needs not to be a logistical challenge, even within a large partnership area. All students and all mentors could be invited to an online preparation session, recorded for those who were not able to attend, this negates the issue of mentors and mentees having to travel and is a more effective use of their time. Link Tutors could then address further queries individually, with their linked schools and students, thus personalising the preparation. In effect, all would be given the same messages, and all would hear each other being given the same message. The identified areas of tension could be openly discussed with everyone, strategies to alleviate them could be shared and thereby they would be pre-empted before they arose.

6.3 The Significance and Implications of the Findings

The mentor/mentee process and relationship is becoming increasingly important as we continue to move towards apprenticeship models of teacher education (DfE, 2016). Mentoring forms such a significant part of a student teacher's education that it stands to

reason that the quality must be high to support student teachers in becoming the most effective teachers that they can be which in turn will have the greatest impact on children's learning and well-being. Mentoring experiences cannot be undervalued as it is known that they can also contribute to a mentee's decision to leave teaching (Hobson, 2016). If we can ensure that the mentoring process is as effective as possible it will also have a positive impact on retention of not only student teachers but early career teachers (Ingersoll and Kralik, 2004). Given the impact that mentoring can ultimately have upon teacher retention then it is imperative that the process is as constructive as possible.

Within the context of the national roll out of the Early Career Framework (DfE, 2019b) in September 2021 there is an opportunity to enrich that framework. School-based mentors are set to take a central role in supporting early career teachers as the government has committed to funding time for mentors to enable them to fulfil their roles and also to fully funding mentor training (DfE, 2019b, p.6). Funding time for mentors to be able to fulfil their mentoring responsibilities will be welcomed by them and their mentees as 'time' is clearly an area of tension and is an aspect which prevents mentors from being able to attend to their responsibilities effectively. Fully funding mentor training gives status to the role of mentor as it underlines its importance, but retaining the use of 'training' indicates that this will be insufficient given that

> mentor preparation needs to go beyond 'training', traditionally conceived as behavioural inculcation without insight (Tomlinson, 1995), and should include planned strategies to assist individuals in developing their identities as mentors.
> (Bullough, 2005, cited in Hobson et al., 2009, p212)

At this point the ECF (DfE, 2019b) does not recognise that mentees would benefit from specific preparation, this works to keep them in their subservient passive roles and therefore the success of the mentoring relationship must still be assumed to lie with the mentors. This is clearly a missed opportunity. The understandings of pivotal terms, such as 'support' and 'mentor' are still not explained but instead are used freely, presumably assuming a shared

understanding. This, again, is an opportunity lost to clarify expectations and therefore leaves the way open for misunderstandings, misconceptions and tensions to arise which ultimately affect the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship and thus its impact upon a mentee's development.

6.4 The Study's Contribution

The study highlights aspects of the mentoring process which foster tension some of which are within the provider's gift to change. It provides justification for a change of approach, a stepping-stone between current practice and Lofthouse's (2018, p248) vision where 'mentoring can be re-imagined as a dynamic hub within a practice development-led model for individual professional learning and institutional growth'. It identifies small-step changes to foster improvement from within. When cohorts of student teachers who were empowered within their mentoring experiences become teachers and members of school leadership teams then schools would be more likely to be in a position to embrace mentoring as a force for change, rather than as a mechanism to maintain the status quo. We are currently still using mentoring models which were in place over 20 years ago, when many school leaders were student teachers and so potentially the process has not evolved as far as it could have. Schools have had to deal with so many changes that perhaps we have not felt able to re-construct our accepted practices, rather we have added to a process which has fundamentally remained the same for decades. However, if we are in harmony with reform-minded perspectives which

> reflect student-centered approaches to teaching and learning and are concerned with the active construction of ideas, including engaging students in concepts and beliefs relevant to their own lives (Bybee, 1997); exploring concepts and relationships; explaining and justifying conclusions and relationships; challenging misconceptions; sharing and examining ideas through discourse; and engaging in collaborative inquiry (Wang & Odell, 2002).
>
> (West, 2016, p25)

Then it would seem to follow that we apply this philosophy to our teaching of not only the children in our schools but to the adults who will be responsible for teaching them to maximise that 'individual professional learning and institutional growth' (Lofthouse, 2018, p248).

6.5 Limitations of the Study and Questions for Further Research

Wellington and Sikes (2006, p725) identified that educational research often occurs within the researcher's own institution and is carried out by a 'researching professional' rather than a 'professional researcher'; this was the context of my own research. In that context I was engaged with 'the reciprocal, recursive, and symbiotic relationships of research and practice, analysis and action, inquiry and experience, theorizing and doing, and being researchers and practitioners' (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 2007, p31). This context was beneficial as

> inside researchers readily know the language of those being studied, along with its particular jargon and are more likely to empathise with those they study because of in-depth understanding of them, less likely to foster distrust and hostility among those they study, are often more willing to discuss private knowledge with those who are personally part of their world, are often more likely to understand the events under investigation and are less likely to be afflicted by outsiders' arrogance where researchers fail to understand what they observe. Inside researchers find that those they study are often more likely to volunteer information to them than they would to outsiders.
>
> Sikes and Potts (2008, p177)

However, mentors were aware that I was an employed member of staff from University X and, despite the benefits of being a researcher working in the same field as them, as outlined by Sikes and Potts (2008), a limitation would be that they may not have felt able to share as openly as I would have liked them to. A hint that this might have been the case was the fact that they did not cite 'time' as being a challenge in regard to the mentoring process but it is, according to the mentees' experiences. This could be construed as an issue of reliability within my study as it contradicted data gathered from the student participants but because literature in the field (Hobson, 2016) clearly identifies 'time' as an issue for teachers

and we know that they are subject to significant workloads (DfE, 2018; DfE, 2018b, DfE 2019e) then I believe this not to be the case.

Lack of anonymity could have cause dilemmas for my mentor participants. Although I had given them assurances that their contributions would be anonymised within my study they were aware, by the nature of focus group discussions, that their contributions would not only be heard by me but by their immediate colleagues. Atkins and Wallace (2012, p49) highlight the tensions and dilemmas associated generally with insider research

> ..it may not be possible to anonymise some key informants, or a situation may arise in which the outcomes of the study, particularly if they are critical of practice, may bring you into conflict with colleagues or senior managers within your institution. There is also particular difficulty around role definition in insider research – to what extent are you a professional and to what extent are you a researcher in each situation that you find yourself in?

The mentor participants were employed by schools who hosted our students' placements and they were aware of my role at the university. In addition, they were participating in focus group discussions where their colleagues would hear their contributions. Therefore, it would be unlikely that they felt confident in saying that they were not able to commit to the role of mentor fully or that they were not able to meet the university's requirements. If they had done this they would have made themselves vulnerable to criticism from colleagues and in turn perhaps exposed themselves to managers in terms of suggesting that they were not able to meet their expectations. Consequently, a potential reason for not sharing their views and experiences openly is that they would not want to communicate to me that they felt they did not have sufficient time to mentor as well as they would like to as this might suggest that they were not fulfilling their roles, roles that their schools were being paid to fulfil. This is an idea which is reflected upon by Hobson and McIntyre (2013, p357) who noted that

> similar motivations to those which contribute to the production of fabrications in schools, notably those associated with impression management and presentation of self, are also likely to cause some teachers to be economical with the truth in their encounters with education researchers.

To overcome any reluctance to share their thoughts fully the mentors would need to be confident that they were anonymous to the researcher and their colleagues, not just that their responses would be anonymised. This would ensure that there would be no repercussions for them as result of what they contributed. Focus group discussions would not be an appropriate mechanism by which to gather their views and experiences about having a lack of time to do the job properly as not only are they clearly identified by the interviewer but also other participants in the group are witnessing their contributions. An alternative would be to distribute anonymous questionnaires, focussed on the aspect of 'time', to mentors in a number of different schools so that mentors could not be inadvertently identified within the published research by reference to potentially identifying factors such as gender or role within a setting (Atkins and Wallace, 2012).

Another aspect for further research would be to pinpoint, and explore understandings of, the key terms used within mentoring. This study identifies multiple understandings of the term 'support' and illuminates the tensions arising from those different understandings. Thus, we know that a rigorous exploration of what 'support' means to mentors and student teachers is necessary but this suggests that there will be multiple understandings of other frequently used terms. It is clearly fundamental to any successful mentoring relationship to have precise definitions of what key terms mean so that expectations can be managed, thus reducing the potential for misunderstanding and resulting tension.

It is also apparent that mentoring participants' understanding of the role of link tutor need to be explored and perhaps redefined. The link tutors in this study were only proactively contacted by schools if there was some kind of issue to resolve, one that schools felt they could not resolve in house. Students reported rarely contacting their link tutors and when they did the outcome was often not positive for them. It appears that links tutors are seen as having an overarching, supervisory and troubleshooting role. This role needs to be re-explored as there would be potential for them to play a much more pro-active role. They

could be more of an external mentor, the benefits of that role being extoled by Hobson et al. (2016), providing coaching and offline emotional support.

6.6 Immediate Implications for Practice

An enhanced level of preparation focussed on mentees, arising from the developed Conceptual Framework to Underpin a Model of Mentoring (Figure 32: V2 Conceptual Framework to Underpin a Model of Mentoring, p218), where mentees are prepared for the real experience of being mentored, will be implemented as a pilot with the next cohort of campus-based PGCE Primary Education students. This programme has been selected primarily because it is one year programme and so we will be able to gauge the impact of our work more quickly, reflect and make any necessary adjustments before rolling it out across other ITE programmes. Given that the research was carried out within the researcher's own institution and was carried out by a 'researching professional' (Wellington and Sikes, 2006, p725) then the findings can be implemented immediately within the professional's remit, to enhance current practice. Preparation Phase 1 will be realised within the first five weeks of the programme, prior to students embarking on their first placement. The second aspect of that phase, where mentors' expectations of the students are shared, will need to be managed carefully so that students know how they will be able to meet those expectations, rather than feel daunted and overwhelmed. Preparation Phase 2 will take place between the students' two assessed placements. Their mentoring experiences will be unpacked within small group tutorials where they will all have the space to have their voices heard and be able to engage fully with others, in guided discussions. The fundamental aspect of this phase is moving from reflecting, where students will think about their actions and experiences, to being able to be reflexive, with a capacity for a level of critical self-reflection (Vivanco, 2018). In this way, students will take account 'of the idea that intelligence admits of error, that we may have falsely identified or misrecognised an object, concept or experience' (May & Perry, 2017, p3), moving beyond taking an experience at face value or

making an assumption that it was a result of another's failings. In Preparation Phase 2 students will examine their own roles in the success of their mentoring experiences, developing an appreciation of the threefold imperative of reflexivity as expressed by May and Perry (2017, pp4-5):

> We may say that reflexivity has a threefold imperative in life. First an awareness of oneself is necessary for the exercise of any rule or sense of obligation of the expectations that are made and reside within us. Second, our traditional or habitual practices require monitoring as we meet unexpected circumstances and interact with other people who have different practices. Third, guidelines for action may be in conflict with each other thereby requiring deliberation and action.

It will be crucial that students embark upon that final placement with a clear understanding of their own role as a mentee and empowered to proactively make a positive impact upon the quality of their mentoring experiences. Preparation Phase 3 will be at the end of their final placement, in the form of a half day workshop. Students will share, and reflect upon, their experiences of being mentored. They will identify what they would have done differently. At the end of their programme they will have examined the role of the mentee and considered how a mentee can significantly impact upon the success of a mentoring relationship. This will prepare students for their experiences as mentees which lie ahead of them and which will have a profound impact upon their professional development and also potentially upon their emotional wellbeing. In a final individual tutorial where they consider their targets for transition, from student teacher to qualified teacher, there will be an expectation that they identify a personal target which will contribute to a positive mentoring experience. As this target will be shared with their NQT mentor this will signal to the mentor from the outset that the mentee acknowledges that they have a constructive role to play in the success of the mentoring relationship. In this way we will enable our student teachers to maximise their role in shaping the most proactive of mentoring experiences and take ownership of their own continuing development. Given that we know that student teachers and teachers in the early

years of their careers can be generally regarded as vulnerable learners, as addressed by Shanks (2014):

> The vulnerability of new teachers can be understood as multiple layers of new experiences to deal with – a new profession, perhaps a new location, probably a brand new workplace with new colleagues, new students, continuing assessment and uncertainty as to whether they will obtain a new post for the subsequent school year. New teachers are in a vulnerable situation as a newcomer to their profession while they continue to learn about teaching and how to be a teacher
>
> (Shanks, 2014, p14)

Then, in addition to the need to improve the quality of practice and thus the quality of the education for our children, we have a moral and ethical duty to work make a positive difference to the professional experiences of their teachers.

Appendix 1: Student Focus Group Discussion Guide

Points for focus group discussion:

How would you define the term ‘mentoring’?
What have you learned from your mentor?
When is the student/mentor relationship a rewarding experience?
What characterizes the most positive relationships with mentors?
What challenges have you encountered during the mentoring process?
What do you find challenging about being mentored?
How have you dealt with those challenges?
How has your mentor dealt with those challenges?

Appendix 2: Mentor Focus Group Discussion Guide

Points for focus group discussion

Why is it that you mentor students?
What have you learned from your experiences?
Do you think there is an optimal time to be a mentor? Why?
In your experience what are the three most useful things a mentor does?
What are you looking for in your mentee when they begin their placement with you?
What challenges have you encountered during the mentoring process?
How did you deal with those challenges?
Did any aspect of the mentoring process unsettle you?
If so please explain
How did you deal with that?
What do providers do currently which helps to prepare you for mentoring?
What do providers do currently which supports you in the process of mentoring?
What could providers do to further prepare you for, and support you with, with regard to the mentoring process?

Appendix 3: Student Mentoring Questionnaire

Mentoring questionnaire – post initial assessed placement

In your experience what are the three most useful things a mentor does?
What have you learned from your mentor?
What challenges have you encountered during the mentoring process?
How did you deal with those challenges?
Did any aspect of the mentoring process unsettle you?
If so please explain
How did you deal with that?
How could your programme have prepared you in dealing with that response?
What did your mentor do to support you?
How did you try to ensure that your experience of being mentored was positive?

Participant Informed Consent

(Working) Research Title	Student teachers' views on what and how student teachers learn from being mentored whilst out on placement in schools in their role as 'student teacher'
Researcher	Sophie Meller

Statement of Confirmation	**Yes**	**No**
I understand that by signing and submitting this form I am agreeing to be considered as a participant in this research study.		
I have been told about and understand the purpose of the study.		
I have been given opportunities to ask questions about my involvement in the study and these have been answered to my satisfaction.		
I understand that my responses to the questions asked above will be rendered anonymous and that I will not be identified personally when findings are published.		
I understand that I can withdraw at any time and that any decision by me to do so would not adversely affect my experience on my programme of study at **** University. [The university was identified in the participants' copies of this sheet]		

Name	
Signature	
Date	

Appendix 4: PG Student data

Participant	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
	In your experience what are the three most useful things a mentor does?	What have you learned from your mentor?	What challenges have you encountered during the mentoring process?	How did you deal with those challenges?	Did any aspect of the mentoring process unsettle you?	If so, please explain	How did you deal with that?	How could your programme have prepared you in dealing with that response?	What did your mentor do to support you?	How did you try to ensure that your experience of being mentored was positive?
PG1	Feedback (constructive) Model good teaching Supports developing behaviour management	Some strategies for: Teaching, differentiation, accessibility and how to assess students	Mentors not welcoming questions or emotional support. Lack of support in learning new things/trying new things. Vague feedback	Asked specific questions around feedback sought emotional support elsewhere	Not knowing where else to seek support informally Fear of saying you weren't confident in something and being rebutted. Lack of	My mentor was not approachable and felt that I could not discuss issues with my link tutor as they knew the head teacher and teachers and my	I just got on with the situation, spoke to my peers and didn't say anything after the issue was raised. Counted down the days to the end of	We were told to speak to link tutors or just get on with it to an extent. More informal pastoral support that would be from an outsider to the course and	She gave me feedback weekly. Observed lessons. Provided examples of planning.	Smiled, was polite, worked as many hours as I could, got involved with extracurricular activities, tried to go out of my way to help the teacher and

			until tackled.		emotional support	information/issues were not confidential. If I did raise an issue the problem was with me or it was my implied fault which was not the case (not reflected in feedback or reports.)	placement and cried!	confidential.		complete work and additional tasks with the children
PG2	Teach me how to learn from mistakes positively. How to be flexible in teaching approache	How to teach a variety of children in terms of behavioural needs. That staying calm in	Communication (on assessed placement) Definitely dropped in last 7 days. Confusion over	Tried to communicate with her myself several times. Accepted and implemented	Towards the end of my placement communication failed and I struggled with not knowing precisely	What really unsettled me was the overall impact one person could have on my	I acknowledged there was a problem so set up a meeting with my link tutor for when placement	Make sure <u>all</u> mentors know what is expected of them (training?) Make sure there are	At the start of placement we talked through everything required to be successful on placement	I was aware of how professionalism affected people's perception of me so I made sure to ask

	s in daily lessons. Guide (but not fully instruct) on how to plan quickly, effectively and creatively	situations is key. To prioritise planning effectively	reports and tasks necessary to complete. Not feeling like I could make any mistakes and when I did, I wasn't allowed to target it	feedback into future planning and teaching. Sought advice from other professional. Hold regular communication with link tutor Kept my head down and carried on.	what I had done wrong and how to rectify the situation. I speculated as to a teaching mistake I had made but no amount of apology and seeking advice seemed to enable her to forget the mistake. The fact she made a decision about me that affected feedback in several areas that confused	confidence and belief in myself as a teacher. I realise part of that was down to me – and boy has my resilience increased! But mentors are there to show us how to try things out and support us in our learning, and unfortunately this just didn't happen at perhaps the most crucial part of my	had finished to discuss the problems I had encountered, and the confusing final placement report I received. Luckily, my link tutor was just as confused and did everything he could to rebuild my confidence and remind me why I want to be a teacher and what I can do.	things in place to make sure students don't feel like this again – I was reminded this is one person after placement had finished. Just confidence on University's part that all mentors know what to expect, how to support and what is really important.	(assessment, planning, behaviour management, etc.) However; this faltered towards the end.	questions, seek advice, implement feedback and imitate teaching approaches I had observed from my mentor. I was also determined I could end the placement positively so I kept trying to reopen lines of communication

					myself and 3 tutors back at university when reading my final report	placement .				
PG3	Looking over lesson plans. Introducing me to the staff/school. Observations that help my teaching practice.	A greater depth of knowledge in relation to the curriculum . Strategies to enhance my practice.	Lack of time to support me.	Consult placement partner.	Completing grade descriptors alongside fellow trainees.	Felt that progress could not be accurately measured. Peer-pressure.	Got on with it	Better parity between Uni and mentor in regards to the grade descriptors.	Provide good end of placement report.	Maintain good relationship
PG4	Advice, support and guidance	To teach How to act in professional teaching	Clash of personalities Issues with 'Ofsted'	Professionally together	Yes.	Yes, issues regarding personalities. My teacher didn't	I 'stepped on egg shells' for a period of time…	It sort of did in a way but I was only being	She was part of the issue, but I changed to a new mentor.	By being professional at all times.

		environment How to respond to a variety of settings	grading system			initially like me which affected the professional relationship	I dulled my enthusiasm a bit.	enthusiastic		
PG5	Help calms your nerves Be a friend Supports you in your ideas	Various teaching strategies	Sometimes given lack of freedom in my planning if mentor did not think it was a good idea	Either went with [what] mentor said or if I really believed my idea was good I still delivered my idea	Yes.	Sometimes felt less favoured compared to the student I was partnered with.	Gained support through other students	More communication with link tutor	Created a friendship, so comfortable to talk about non-school things to take mind off work load sometimes	Maintain a good relationship through communication
PG6	Monitors your progress as a trainee teacher. Gives you advice	Behaviour management strategies.	I did not have any 1:1 support as this was a paired placement. This may have been beneficial	N/A	Receiving feedback together as a pair. May have been better to have small meetings.	N/A	N/A	Placing students in separate classes.	Always asked if I was ok and needed any support Provided me with any key	I responded to feedback by incorporating any comments into future lessons

	Recognises your strengths and weaknesses		in terms of my progress						information needed.	
PG7	Provides support, experience and background knowledge of the children Gives advice	How to assess children's progress How to differentiate	Subject knowledge gaps	Spoke to mentor who planned and taught the lesson and allowed me to observe and pick up some points	Asking the mentor to take time out of her busy week to have regular meetings for weekly reviews	Uni request a weekly review – however my mentor did not always have a spare 30 minutes at the end of school, due to other responsibilities	Collated all the questions I had each week and asked them whenever she was free. If not all questions were answered, I would do my best to look for the answers elsewhere	It depended on the school	Tried to give me as much time as possible	N/A
PG8	Ask if you are having any issues with your	How they would deal with certain situations	Not a quick response Questions not being	Organised 1;1 with mentor	Felt the teacher had little time to help if I	N/A	Partner support	Closer link with link tutor, they should get	Answer questions I had	Building a strong relationship with mentor

	placement. Support you within your work Make it clear exactly what you are being asked to do		answered properly		had queries			involved more	Looked through questions	
PG9	Lesson observations & feedback Effective teacher modelling Ideas for resources	How to model effectively How to plan engaging lessons & resources How to improve lessons	Workload	Spoke to mentor about how to balance workload	As our mentor was part of the SLT she often had other responsibilities which meant that she was out of the classroom a lot	I think I would have benefited from my mentor being around more for continual feedback	Me and my student partner supported each other to overcome this	Paired us with a teacher with less responsibilities	Helped with a couple of problem children where behaviour management was an issue Effective feedback to help me develop lessons and teaching	Built good relationships with my mentor, student partner and other staff in the school to allow my knowledge of teaching to develop

PG10	Support and feedback Opportunities to team plan Opportunities to attend training/meetings	Importance of presentation Behaviour management techniques multitasking	Mentor's existing planning is last minute Organisation and admin last minute and communicated quickly	I asked if I could plan earlier - may have a different focus/aim etc. I asked for a weekly meeting. Then the mentor often cancelled it.	The management and organisation was very stressful and last minute	N/A	I learnt how important it is to be prepared and keep on top of everything.	Communicate between link tutor and class teacher	Lesson observations were useful	Remained polite, grateful and appreciative of his time.
PG11	Provide you with resources/ hints and tips Gives feedback continuously (even when not being observed) Values you as part of the	A lot! I have learned how to manage my time better, and they have shown me tips (such as using photos for evidence) to cut down marking	Time constraints/ Workload of class teacher (mentor)	Set up weekly timetables between two students and class teacher (mentor) And allocated time on a Friday to do paperwork (such as	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	In general, gave contact details to contact them whenever support was needed/ they were very reassuring, gave constant advice but	I respected that my mentor had other duties, and tried to be as independent as possible, but knew they were there for support when it

	teaching staff	time. Also to use experience/ expertise of other colleagues		weekly review)					also allowed me to be independent to develop as a trainee teacher.	was needed.
PG12	Provides 1:1 support Provides opportunities for observation and learning Provides honest feedback that we can learn from.	How to plan lessons How to keep a consistent lesson structure	I felt sometimes that the mentor dictated too much rather than letting us learn and try things for ourselves.	I had to comply, for the most part, with what my tutor wanted and tried to ease my own practice and style in gradually.	I felt sometimes that I couldn't go against my mentor	It was sometimes 'my way or the highway'	I had to put up with that as I worried my grades would be affected	Tell us nice ways to go around the teacher so as not to upset or irritate them	Helped with planning Provided contact on weekends if I was struggling	I tried to create a positive relationship and tried to listen and take on board what my tutor told me.

PG13	Valuable lesson observation feedback – how to improve in the future – model/tips.	How to balance time/activities more effectively/ efficiently – make sure I include various strategies (e.g. talk partners, questioning, plenary, etc.) in one lesson	Limited time – paperwork – time with mentor not always used efficiently (e.g. Weekly review of progress - mentor asked to leave with him didn't really have chances to discuss.	Contacted link tutor if concerned about anything, majority of the time, just followed the teacher and got on with things.	Limited time School expectation different from my own expectations	Amount of teaching that I was meant to be doing. Also, teachers preparing planning – not giving students the independence to plan	Adapt the school ethos	Make sure that teachers are aware of what the students are expected to be doing/time they should be teaching	Provide opportunities to make teaching/planning my own Available to talk to and discuss planning	Be open to teachers' suggestions – constructive feedback – respond and take their advice on board. Ensure that my code of conduct is professional throughout placement.
PG14	Provide realistic and supported opportunities for professional developm	I learned the importance of trusting and believing in my own practice	Often it was difficult to find time to have in depth meetings with my mentor on	We did not, we had to work with what we were given	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Gave us many opportunities to teach and be creative with my practice	I was able to take critique and feedback and utilise it. I valued the advice and

	ent and training. Provide advice, support and feedback on a personal level Gives the opportunity to be creative		a weekly basis						as possible	support given. I felt this kept things positive.
PG15	Supportive role Encouragement Guidance to facilitate and extend learning	New skills and techniques for teaching Developing my own knowledge (Subject, behaviour management etc.)	Time – to talk and collaborate ideas due to different roles of mentor (NQT mentor, Assistant head, Phase leader and coordinator)	Learnt to manage time efficiently, knowing what I wanted to discuss so I wasn't taking up extra time. Making it a valuable use of mentor's time	Just the initial meeting/getting to know the mentor	Nervous before starting placement – if we would work well together	Ensured we created a good working relationship, got to know each other.	Emphasise how important this relationship is	Made me feel comfortable, building a strong professional relationship.	I tried to support the teacher also, working together as a collaborative team

PG16	Supports you with planning lessons = how to improve them etc. Coaches during situation - while teaching mentor would stop you to show how to improve/praise etc. Models to you outstanding practice	Importance of modelling to children Need to differentiate for all children / ability groups not just SEN All lessons need a 'wow!' or hook to engage children from the beginning	<u>PACE</u> Pace of my teaching to ensure high quantity of work in books. Mentor felt I needed to model more / link tutor said I didn't	Worked on PACE with advice from mentor and used this as a focus in observations	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Built a professional relationship but strong relationship with mentor. We worked well together, was fully supported and given great advice.
PG17	Feedback from all lessons even if just verbal Work collaborati	Teaching and behaviour strategies Assessment for learning	<u>Time constraints</u>	Decided on set day for feedback for weekly review	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Maintained a professional relationship whilst working together,

	vely on planning Encouragement to reach targets									during feedback and review sessions
PG18	Modelling good practice in lessons before I taught them so I could use them as inspiration. Providing resources to help me develop my subject knowledge Giving constructive criticism in feedback, including suggestio	How to creatively engage children in a lesson, drawing from drama and imaginative resources How to plan effectively so that I could deliver clear and concise lessons	Grading – criteria being used & applied as though you are a qualified teacher rather than a trainee	Accepted that this was the criteria they were applying and took advice to move up the criteria	No	I was very comfortable with my mentor and developed a good working relationship with them	N/A	N/A	N/A	By behaving in a positive and professional manner at all times. I was there to learn, but I also had to independently reflect on my own experience and share that with my mentor so they could see my progressio

	ns for improvements									n throughout my practice, not just in my teaching
PG19	Gives feedback for observed lessons Helps with any queries	The needs of children in the class	Throughout placement I felt my mentor offered inconsistent support. I felt the majority of time I was planning and teaching without advice or verbal feedback	I had a strong bond with my placement partner which helped a lot. Also I was confident to ask the other teacher for advice and support	Yes.	From early in the placement, I taught many lessons and never received feedback, or praise – NOTHING. This was rather draining. Then in assessed placement, the feedback was negative and most elements were RI and	Just had to get on with it and develop in as many areas as possible	Link tutor could meet with class mentors at the beginning	Give some advice on observed lessons Allowed me to use the computer in the morning and use her fob to access equipment	I remained positive, enthusiastic and always tried hard. I respected the classroom and teacher and acted professionally at all times

						inadequate				
PG20	Advice and talking through potential lesson plans. Feedback and advice on how to improve Makes you feel comfortable in a new environment	Always, always have a 2 minute hook (video, song etc) to get the kids interested Never assume prior knowledge	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Was always positive and suggest ways to improve in relation to the standards, always praised when he often felt I'd earned it, kept morale up. Always human, funny.	Tried to make sure I'd acted upon advice given. Always considered the possibility of improving what I've done.
PG21	Critical feedback – focus on strengths and weaknesses, how both could be	Picked up some good tips and advice on how to improve my practice –	Nothing serious, mentor from school and University were there for me to	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	University – visited school and looked at files School – observed lessons,	Always tried to build on the feedback and targets and made sure they

	improved through observing lessons For student to be able to observe mentor teaching	e.g. assessment strategies	support my practice						helped with planning, general guidance	were set in my next lesson where possible
PG22	Give regular feedback on both assessed and non-assessed lessons Offers support with planning Regular meetings	I have learned a range of teaching styles and strategies that work best in different lessons/ different times of day. How to plan lessons, learning objectives and success criteria	No challenges, very positive experiences	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Very friendly and open. Regular meetings to discuss any worries or issues Lots of feedback on what I was doing well and what I needed to improve Answered questions/	Took on board any advice given Built good relationships with staff

		successfully Behaviour management							checked over plans	
PG23	Gave guidance on planning Gave feedback to help progression Assessment strategies	Behaviour management	Not having the right support at times 'I did not get graded outstanding, it would be hard for you to get it' Following her lead wasn't always the right thing to do	Spoke to link tutor Just got on with it and thought of the benefits of finishing the course	The part of not being able to reach outstanding and feeling as if I couldn't go anywhere	Often felt like I wasn't good enough to achieve that status although I was only training	Kept pushing towards outstanding statements -getting graded outstanding in aspects from tutor and knowing it was possible	Ways in which we could approach or discuss the comments	N/A	Went in positive every day and treat them all as a fresh day
PG24	Helps develops ideas for lessons Tells you where you need to	How to track progression How to make good LO	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Helped pick out standards and evidence to go with it	Had a positive professional relationship and ensured I

	improve and how Talks to you about how a school works (mid-term planning)	and success criteria How to differentiate work							Gave me many resources and books to plan from and gave inspiration	was always polite Was patient if my mentor was busy and waited to speak to her at a good time
PG25	Help with collaborative planning Supports you Useful feedback	Behaviour management strategies How to use time efficiently Subject knowledge / schemes	Pace Behaviour management	Taking on feedback Making detailed observations	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Informed me of policies Informed me of planning Supported me and discussed lessons throughout the day	Taking on positive and negative feedback staying professional Maintaining relationships
PG26	Gives guidance on how to improve lessons	How to structure lessons to engage the class	CT's were on job share so was difficult to	There was no way around it	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Listened to any problems I had and helped me	Form a good work relationship

	Helps develop ideas Provides support	Behaviour management strategies	make time to do weekly reviews etc.						to find ways to solve these	
PG27	Support Feedback Advice	How to improve my strategies by giving me constant feedback after every lesson. Whether assessed or not	Did not have mentor for a couple of weeks	Had to just continue without her guidance and support until she returned	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
PG28	Support Advice Guidance	The importance of reflection during the practice I have undertaken	Paired placement a struggle Divided attention Time Experience of the mentor	Make the most of the other staff in the school	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

PG29	Offer support Teach valuable lessons about how to teach Give feedback on your performance	How to cope with all the pressures of being a teacher	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Support was always given and I was always made to feel comfortable in asking questions I had. From the very first day I was treat as a teacher and my mentor never undermined my authority which allowed me to feel confident in the class	I forged a good professional relationship with my mentor and this made it easy for me to ask for support and for her to pass on constructive criticism
PG30	Support in both academic	More about time managem	Mentored by two class	Listened to both mentors	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Provided advice	By remaining profession

	and personal capacity Provides constructive feedback Gives advice on how to approach teaching where required	ent, how to prioritise and how to manage workload	teachers who often had conflicting ideas	and used them both in practice to suit my own style					when asked Helped develop techniques to manage workload more effectively	al throughout
PG31	Support Feedback Positive reinforcement	I have learned to accept positive and constructive feedback	None particularly Perhaps timing to have meetings	I ensured I made effective use of time in meetings and contact via emails	N/A	N/A	N/A	More communication / training establish what teachers / mentors should be doing or providing for students	Read what teacher was completing on my weekly reviews and linked it more effectively to standards	I had a positive working relationship with my mentor and I took on board what she told me
PG32	Support Inform	School routine	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Always there, helped with	Friendly at all times

	Constructive feedback	Subject knowledge							everything including placement Friendly and supportive Very approachable	Developed a professional relationship Responded to feedback
PG33	Support Teachers Guidance	Teaching strategies Behaviour management	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Very helpful Friendly and supportive, settled nerves Very approachable	Developed professional relationship Responded to feedback positively.
PG34	Support Guide Inform	How to approach lessons in different ways to ensure progress is made	Time – often my mentor did not have time to allocate me	We had meetings that didn't take up a lot of time but made sure we had those meetings at any	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	She was extremely helpful and supportive	Developed a good relationship with my mentor

		A variety of strategies to overcome different barriers to learning		opportunity						
PG35	Advice Guidance Support	Teaching styles How to have a work-life balance Overcome challenges of the job	Behaviour management skills Subject knowledge	Resilience	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Always willing to give more information and give support when needed	Be teacher organised
PG36	Advice Support Guidance	Useful feedback Good advice re general practice Good career advice	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Weekly meetings Always available for contact	Maintain positive relationship

PG37	Guide Advise Encourage	Learnt a lot about how to improve on my weaknesses. She taught me how to self-assess and build upon what didn't meet the required standard	Felt that when I was being graded, the mentor graded my lesson in a generic "At this stage you should be at this level, therefore that's what I'll grade you" way.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Regular feedback Encouragement and gave me freedom to try new strategies	Just went with the flow
PG38	Comfortable in class/school Help develop in role as professional Develop teaching practice	Practical advice Political side of school Leadership flexibility	Had a really good relationship, felt it sometimes meant lesson observations were better than actually were	Tried to be critical of self when discussing feedback	No, developed good relationship	N/A	N/A	N/A	Very supportive **Treat as equal** Practical advice Explained great deal Highlighted development	Very open Discussed interests outside of school to develop relationship

									opportunities	
PG39	Model teacher Give advice on how to deal with specific incidents Advice on planning	How to plan lessons properly to keep the children engaged throughout. How to stay positive in praise to keep children going	Mentor stating that they didn't have that issue therefore wouldn't know how to deal with it	Spoke to other members of staff about how they would handle issues	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Showed me her own planning, gave me advice on how to tackle specific behavioural issues in the class	Staying professional at all times. Asking for their advice before that of anyone else
PG40	Checking on lesson plans Reassurance Constructive feedback	I have learnt to be more confident within myself. I have also learnt how to adopt different teaching styles	Time to sit down and talk. Pressures on the teacher	Sometimes weekly reviews were done later than they should have so other times scheduled	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	She gave me good advice and helped me with lesson plans	Having a good rapport with my mentor and understanding that she had things to do as well as me

PG41	Strategies for managing workload Goes through day to day planning Reassures and provides pastoral support	Time management strategies	Time preferences mentor to find time to sit down	Concise meeting over lunch	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Reassured Checked planning	Proactive in seeking responses
PG42	Model teaching practice Provide realistic teaching advice Provide support whilst teaching	How to provide clear instructions Behaviour management techniques How to manage time	Teacher didn't have a lot of time Teacher unable to relate their ideas clearly	I found extra support in other teachers and students	Not as much support as I felt I needed / Direction	Not given enough positive Feedback or time to discuss key issues	I got support from the student mentor	Provided more sessions on planning and time management	N/A	Maintaining a professional relationship

PG43	Helps to make links between students and school staff, particularly at the beginning of placements Provides information about school policies etc. Co-ordinates school experience at appropriate pace for student	Organisation – i.e. useful ways to record assessment	Time to ask for advice to spend on weekly reviews was limited Mentor occasionally contradicted Uni/link tutor requests	Asked advice from other sources If possible discussed possible approaches	Communication between class teacher training co-ordinator within school / uni was not always clear – different messages / expectations	N/A	N/A	Clear guidelines about placement expectations and logistics of weekly review meetings for students and schools	Meetings or discussions Organised opportunities – i.e. phonics observation	Flexibility – Open discussion
PG44	Contact within the school	I have learned a lot regarding	He was the deputy head so very busy,	Arranged meetings at the end of	Communication between Uni and	N/A	N/A	Clear guidance given to both	Mentor gave advice on how to	Maintain a good

	Helpful to answer questions about school or get advice Support	behaviour management	I didn't want to disturb him	day/week to discuss lessons/plans and any other areas	mentor. Mentor didn't appear to know all the things that were needed.			pupils and mentors	improve lessons	relationship
PG45	Provide detailed feedback after lesson observations Advise student different aspects of training and planning lessons Be available and happy to answer questions	How to balance planning and wider school commitments Effective behaviour management strategies How to run the class on a day to day basis	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Make sure that teachers are aware of the tasks that we have been set. Training coordinators did not always share the link with the class teachers	Provided constant feedback Made us feel welcome to ask anything at any time. Support was there if I needed it	Shared commitment Flexibility – offered to switch lessons and take on extra responsibilities if needed

PG46	Provide a safety net for students to fall into Give feedback on ideas for lessons	How a lesson can be 'winged' Ways to be flexible with teaching content	Conflict of knowledge Contradicting mentor Vagueness of end of placement report comment	Talking to mentor	N/A	N/A	N/A	Presenting idea that could come up and how to deal with them	Challenge ideas for lessons	Having a good rapport with mentor
PG47	Support Different teaching techniques/Observations Advise within school	Planning effectively / time management	Always finding time to fit meetings in ensuring that mentor was aware of tasks	N/A	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
PG48	Give critical, informative feedback Provide support in terms of	Where to improve	Getting time to discuss and when this occurs gaining a balanced view from them that does NOT	Worked around their schedule, waited around behind for longer	The subjectivity to which they grade you – based their grades in comparison to	I couldn't be placed high a lot of the time, because she didn't agree with 'outstanding' or see	N/A	They could better elaborate on the grading to the teachers / mentors	Gave feedback	Made it look like I took their advice, even though I didn't particularly agree with it

	subject knowledge Give insight into the politics and procedures of the school		include a comparison to my peer.		themselves	herself as that on a day to day basis				
PG49	Advice on planning, teaching ideas, children etc. Give feedback from lessons to improve teaching Emotional support	How to plan What the role of the teacher involves How to tick off standards	She was mentoring 2 other students as well as myself, so sometimes there wasn't enough time to support us all in detail	Became more independent and took support from my peer	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Everything she possibly could – Great mentor!	I tried to offer as much as I was given so it was an equal effort
PG50	Support with grade descriptor Taught me everything	Behaviour management	Personal differences	Put up with it for the duration of the placement	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Regular observation	Tried to be professional

	Planning									Responded to feedback
PG51	Provide feedback based on areas to improve in and positives about lessons Support for lesson ideas Supportive approaches to discuss any issues with etc.	How to make lessons engaging / interactive Information regarding assessment / pupil progress A lot with regard to differentiation	Very high expectations which I sometimes struggled with Quite crucial however, this was also helpful as I knew the areas to improve in	Was positive in response to criticisms. Professional attitude	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	She helped me quite a lot with planning – very good ideas She answered any Q's that I had on various aspects of teaching Passed on her knowledge – very experienced	I took her criticisms on board and tried to be as positive as I could be and always polite
PG52	Give feedback Help with queries Help with the	Meeting the needs of the class organisation skills	Inconsistent support – really willing sometimes and totally	I worked really well with my placement partner which helped a	Really negative feedback until link tutor	N/A	Just got on with it Talked to my placement partner	N/A	Gave some advice Felt like I received more	Try to take the positives to boost confidence to stop from

	children's specific needs		uninterested the others. Not given any feedback a lot of the time	lot especially in the early stages of placement. Support from other staff	observation Didn't have a lot of opportunity to observe her teach –kicked out of class!				support from my next door teacher than my mentor	feeling so low
PG53	Advises you how to model effectively Gives regular feedback on lessons Gives insights into life as a teacher, someone to answer questions	I have learned a lot but the main thing has been how to create practical, active lessons. How to organise practical lessons and how to differentiate them effectively	Sometimes restraints have meant I have had less help with resources or there has been mixed communication with some planning of lesson. However, this is all	I was creative and thought of ways to give lesson without certain resources. I just accepted any miscommunication as my fault to avoid unnecess	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Good relationship, took on advice, made sure to ask questions if I was hesitant about something. Ensured I built a good relationship with mentor so I could make a

			good practice for when I will be on my own. Not much time for looking at data	ary conflict.						positive contributio n to learning. Always being organised is important
PG54	Structure my time in school Feedback about my lessons to help me improve	Time managem ent skills	Finding time in KS1. School wanted us to be in Y6 and seemed fairly restrictive	Created our own timetable but it didn't matter	No	N/A	I didn't	Better communic ation of expectatio ns between Uni and school. Handbook perhaps more concise	Mentor was also a link tutor. Generally very good but also had many other students, meetings etc. Maybe a class teacher with less responsibil ities	Positive throughout . Done whatever I was asked to do
PG55	Gave me detailed feedback on my lesson	How to plan effectively in a cross curricular	Sometime s finds it difficult to find time required to	Was just understan ding of the situations tried to fit	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Helped with my planning Intervened in my	Was as supportive as possible

	Gave me freedom and opportunities to try out and plan anything that I was interested in e.g. Behaviour management strategies	fashion without losing the focus of learning	guide a student teacher (Weekly reviews) Says one thing and does another – In practice some things don't work e.g. Educational visit booklets	around her busy schedule I just did as the teacher said, however, kept it in mind that if it was my own class I might do it differently					lesson where needed – suggested mindfulness techniques to use with the children	And offered to do anything and everything. Remained professional
PG56	Offer detailed feedback Gave me opportunities Allowed me to implement suggestions	To always be confident in what I do Always apply any/all feedback from previous experiences	Accepting teaching from my mentor, which took the 'tough love' approach to feedback Keeping the lessons I taught in	Through getting to know my mentor Mimicking my mentor	Being thrown into the deep end at the beginning	Needed time to understand my mentor I didn't feel prepared and confident enough to teach the	Building relationships	I guess there isn't much they could've done – as it was the approach and philosophy of my mentor, which the programme wouldn't	N/A	By making sure I approached my mentor in a positive manner when I had a query

		To be aware of the pace of my teaching To model everything I teach very clearly	line with my planned times was challenging			whole class		be expected to know		
PG57	Valuable advice about their experiences Support when practice is tough Motivational	Different strategies surrounding behaviour management and differentiation techniques	I was not in the same classes for registration or subjects and so my mentor did not once see me teach, but had to fill out a weekly review with only second hand info provided by my	I tried to provide info about my progress, such as lesson objectives to my mentor but still it seemed she did not have a clear picture of my progression	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Experience Advice Noticing down moments	N/A

			observers. From this perspective I felt my progress was one step forward, two back							
PG58	Gives accurate critical feedback on lessons even on those which aren't officially observed Checks lesson plans Gives an increasing level of freedom over planning	Useful methods to manage and reduce stress levels	Once the mentor had confidence in my teaching, I was often left on my own which meant I didn't always get feedback	I gave him feedback on my lesson and asked for advice on how he would have adapted it	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Gave examples for each lesson how he would achieve the outstanding criteria of the lesson observation	Aim to keep the relationship professional rather than friendship

PG59	Lesson observations Ideas Inspiration	How to teach using particularly interactive styles Information about pupil progress e.g. marking to enhance future learning	No challenges – class teacher was really supportive	N/A	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Provided lesson feedback, provided ideas, advised me how to progress into beyond outstanding	Built a good relationship with teacher and the rest of the staff Worked hard to deliver high quality lessons consistently
PG60	Feedback Targets advice	From feedback and lesson observation I've learned to progress as a trainee teacher and the steps it involves	Personal clashes and not agreeing with certain aspects but nothing that was difficult in solving	Had discussion and worked around it	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	My mentor was extremely helpful and friendly throughout the placement. I've kept in contact with him after leaving	Good attitude and positive behaviour

									the school.	
PG61	Supports and guides you in school Model teaching Support	Belief in myself Guidance and support How to plan and differentiate	Lack of contact from university	Speaking to peers from the course. Other teachers' advice	I felt that the teacher lacked of knowledge of grading which made me feel uncomfortable, not showing true reflection	N/A	Spoke to class teacher but there was no outcome	N/A	Link tutor supported and other teachers gave guidance	N/A
PG62	Emotional support and encouragement Subject knowledge Supportive feedback when link tutor observed – supported	Planning Teaching strategies To be positive – very difficult with partner	Very difficult experience with partner timing	Meetings The timing was not able to be adopted	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Open to conversation any time. Honest, happy to help Provided planning, assessment when possible	Built honest and positive relationship

	me when link tutor stated comments									
PG63	Emotional support Making teaching fun and enjoyable Supportive with planning	How to support children in learning and with personal issues Several mathematical methods and other subject knowledge Lesson structure and behaviour management	None	N/A	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Ensured I always felt confident and happy about all lessons I taught before I taught them. Ensured I knew what I needed to work on every week	Good communication to build a trusting, happy relationship Offer help and support in all lessons to be assist mentor
PG64	Guidance with planning Constructive	Behaviour management Planning	Miscommunication in regards to what was exactly	Emailed ***** [link tutor]	Slightly in regards to miscommunication after the	Planning. She thought we were doing it when we	Just carried on as expected and stayed	Better communication	Planning and feedback	By being polite and reaching out

	feedback after a lesson Her opinion on ideas	Subject knowledge	expected. She did not know what was expected from us.		Christmas break	had agreed she was and then she made us feel very unwelcome at one stage	professional			
PG65	Guidance Feedback support	Leave a bad lesson in the past learn from it and move on	Found it difficult to get on with her – did not feel happy in her class	Chatted to deputy head, got offered to move class. Took it	No	N/A	Discussion with other teacher	Link tutor helped	N/A	Communicated with deputy head
PG66	Gave me their planning Feedback on lessons Ideas when planning lessons	How to plan ICT skills	My mentor was useful with regards to planning however on numerous occasions planning was changed and	I adapted every time however it caused a lot of unnecessary stress. I was worried about any grade descriptors so	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Gave planning A lot of support with ICT	I built bonds with all staff not just mentor.

			lesson resources altered on day of lesson or during lesson. Mentor felt that grade descriptor booklets and weekly reviews were too long and unnecessary	eventually they went to principal						
PG67	Feedback Advice Ensuring progression	Behaviour management	My mentor was extremely hard to approach and continually focused on what I was doing wrong One lesson she	My confidence was extremely low and the issues really unsettled me. I had to fly home 3 times during the assessed	I felt that I wasn't supported sufficiently by my mentor or placement	N/A	I continued to work hard on placement and I was able to complete the placement with a good grade	This was a difficult situation, but I felt that this programme would not have prepared me for it	Lesson observations feedback Weekly reviews	Acted on feedback continually and I didn't let the issue affect my professional nature

			shouted at me in front of the class before I began to teach my lesson, stating that what I planned was incorrect	placement in order to overcome the challenges						
PG68	How to improve a lesson Supportive to appropriate levels Models effective teaching	How to be organised and deal with workload How to ensure all learners are catered for within a lesson How to focus on my own thinking for what I want to	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Looked over my planning and resources prior to a lesson to see if they were appropriate Guidance Professional but friendly Advice	Made a positive relationship Held high expectations for learners Tried to meet their expectations of me and go beyond

		say when delivering a lesson							Modelling outstanding teaching practice	
PG69	Provide support Ensure that suitable targets are discussed and set Give direction on school based targets tasks set by university	The importance of matching grade descriptors with standards and future targets	Lack of communication between university and mentor / school.	Showed her the new handbook	Lack of communication between school and university	N/A	N/A	N/A	Supported us during link tutor visits	Try to maintain a positive relationship Always ask her for help and advice first
PG70	Feedback on lesson Support Keep up to date on school life	Behaviour management appropriate to class Standard of planning and	FILES!	Respond to feedback on improving files	N/A	N/A	Got on with it	Information on files such as tracking focus children and more specific info about placement	Willing to listen Provide feedback	Have a positive relationship Respond to their feedback - whether

		assessment files						rather than a lot of irrelevant info		agreed or disagreed
PG71	Feedback is structured Good for creating ideas Support emotionally	Differentiation and behaviour managementtechnique	Lack of knowledge of planning to university standard Planning and assessment file knowledge	Through university colleagues – support Other students in the school	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Positive class observations and giving me additional time to prepare	Asked relevant questions
PG72	Provides support throughout placement Provides constructive feedback after lesson observations	How to plan lessons effectively How to manage time effectively How to cope with stress	Although my mentor was very welcoming and approachable she was also very busy and I felt uncomfortable asking her to	I spoke to my mentor arranging a time to complete different tasks every week so she would set this time aside	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Through building a positive relationship with my mentor I was able to ask questions about the children and how	By developing a good relationship

	Makes you feel welcome and comfortable in the classroom		complete weekly reviews etc with me						they might learn best	
PG73	Explains how to plan e.g. structure and resources Gives feedback on the lessons they have observed Gives students tips on how to deal with NQT year	I now understand how to differentiate effectively The importance of presentation of books Where to find resources to support core subjects How to set learning objectives and	Taking over a class where the teacher has strong views on how the class should be set in terms of ability which I did not always agree with	The teacher was very accommodating of my suggestions to move children around ability groups based on my own observation	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	By building a good rapport with my mentor and taking on all feedback I was given

		success criteria								
PG74	Help/Guidance with planning Encouragement	How to plan/deliver lessons How to assess appropriately	Felt at sometimes a little 'robbed' as mentor would mark good instead of outstanding as I would need somewhere to move into next placement	I didn't. I accepted this grade although it did not reflect my teaching	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Verbal and written feedback Encouragement	I tried to be as cooperative as possible I was polite and responded to feedback
PG75	*Blank*	Nothing	Mentor wasn't overly forth coming	Talk to my class teacher	No	*Blank*	*Blank*	*Blank*	Not Much	*Blank*
PG76	Supports me when 'settling in' school tour/introducing to others etc	Liaising with all staff is vital. My mentor openly discussed how it was	Contradicting information from class teacher and mentor	Discussed with both the teacher and mentor and resolved	A meeting with both class teacher and mentor	N/A	Discussed with both	I think the programme could have arranged for a day previous to	Weekly meetings	Maintained a good working relationship with my mentor and class teacher

	Weekly reviews discusses positives in a lot of detail as to understand where I am and also problems for future targets Detailed feedback on regular observations	important to understand the importance of where two children came from/were going to and during the school day – know all staff they meet	which could cause planning confusion, which then affected my observations	issues, and discussed link tutor feedback in detail from both, and my reasoning for planning	once a week			placement starting to meet mentors		and discussed any queries and worries with them
PG77	Talk through feedback Talk about things I was unsure about Progress from myself	That there is support if needed	Maths subject knowledge was not at the standard therefore I spoke and got feedback from them	Talking through the challenge with the mentor	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Talk about different strategies I could have used in lesson One to one maths sessions	Built a good relationship with the mentor – staff meetings and stayed after school to help

	and children									
PG78	Observations Feedback Show the class	How to get on with people I don't agree with	Different teaching styles Disagreeing about things in lesson	N/A	Having to confront them with any problems	N/A	Tried to be professional	N/A	N/A	Put lots of effort in to try and find common ground
PG79	Be available Create a supportive environment Offer guidance provide feedback	How to manage my time to maximise teaching time in the classroom	Finding time for meetings	Designated specific time slot each week for meetings	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Provided me with feedback after every lesson whether formal or informal Always let me know she was available if I had any concerns	Made sure I was flexible with meetings, established a professional working relationship Made sure I followed school policies and had a prior knowledge of the school

										before starting
PG80	Helps you get used to school Provide helpful info on students Provide constructive feedback	I feel my teaching style is very similar to my mentor as it was evident that it worked with my previous class	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	My mentor assisted with issues surrounding lesson planning and behaviour management. I very much feel like we were a team	I didn't rock the boat, was polite and did everything I was asked. At the end of the day the teacher we are with is doing us a massive favour
PG81	Lesson observation and feedback	How to ensure outstanding teaching and move towards your goal or next target	Teacher struggled for time due to position in school	Fit around her schedule whenever best	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Feedback Lesson observations Encouragement	All feedback is constructive and never personal. I wouldn't improve without it. The placement

										wouldn't last forever, remaining professional and finishing placement helped this
PG82	Guidance Support Advice	Different ways of assessing within lessons How to reach high professional standards	Communication between link tutor and uni about time in the class teaching	Talk	The communication between link tutor and mentor	I asked my link tutor for help about struggling with time and uni work. The message got mixed up by the time it reached the school and I got given out to from head teacher	It upset me but got through it	No	Just told me to put it behind me and got on	N/A
PG83	Feedback	Things to include in	None – had a	N/A	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	She was friendly,	Always listened

	Advice when planning General support	a lesson e.g. lots of mini plenaries Behaviour management strategies	great relationship with mentor. She was lovely						open, funny and felt like I could talk to her about anything She gave me advice when planning and checked my plans, feedback after observations, helped with target setting	well, respond to feedback and use her advice. I also helped her with workload e.g. marking, covered when she got called In for last minute meetings, showed my appreciation
PG84	Offers experience Explains the expectations and offers guidance	I have learned many techniques for teaching such as behaviour managem	I found it challenging to feel reliant upon someone for help	I ensured that I worked hard to do what I could on my own and ask for	Having to ask for future guidance	I didn't like feeling like I was annoying the teacher knowing how much	Explained my feelings and apologised if I needed further support, luckily my	By ensuring all mentors were understanding of the fact that we were just	Was willing to offer time and experience in order to help me	By working hard to build positive relationships with my mentor

	Gives constructive feedback on how to improve	ent and planning		guidance if not sure		she had to do herself	mentor was very supportive	starting out so would need support		
PG85	Experience Explanation of expectations Feedback and constructive comments	Planning Confidence Differentiation	Getting to know 3 different mentors from being swapped classes	Tried to get on with engaging children and classroom role	Yes	Being swapped classes three times and having to start the process over again	Used PPA time to organise job list	Sending me to a school which allowed students in year 6 and not send too many students to one school	PPA time	Working hard to build positive relationships within the whole school
PG86	Observations and feedback Help plan a series of lessons Demonstrate effective practice	Effective modelling How to plan a series of lessons	Negative attitude towards working with students Lack of time a [to?] thoroughly explain planned	Remain professional Support from peers	Teacher's attitude toward mentoring students	Limited time, resulting in minimal support Unsupportive of student adopting creative	Peer support Remain professional	N/A	Help with planning Modelling some processes	Sought and reacted to feedback Professional demeanour

			lessons etc			approaches				
PG87	Give feedback on observations Supports behaviour management	Importance of formative assessment	Lack of support Lack of communication about planned events Lack of structure	Tried to ask questions and be as knowledgeable as possible Worked with other students to figure things out	Yes	Felt awkward and unwanted at times, like a spare part	Tried to work on feedback	N/A	Not a lot	Follow all advice and work on areas of weakness
PG88	Gives guidance Shows alternate methods Gives ideas	How to incorporate topic work into all subjects	Sometimes my mentor expected me to do things exactly his way which was difficult due to my current experience	I asked my mentor to model how he would like me to do the lesson, so I was then able to do this	Sometimes, mentors expect you to be an outstanding teacher immediately	N/A	Asked for further feedback on how to improve my approach to a lesson	N/A	Tried to show alternate techniques for modelling	I had a positive attitude and tried hard to build a working relationship

PG89	Teaching advice Planning How to improve	Job opportunities Classroom management	Time – busy to converse sometimes Sometimes last minute information passed on	Had to ask in advance Took it upon myself to learn from mistakes	Sometimes felt unable to approach due to her time constraints. Hard to catch	N/A	Positive approach Negative into positive Allowed me to grow as a teacher	Don't really think they can	Answer questions Methods	Remained professional Got on with it waited patiently for opportunities to talk
PG90	Supportive feedback Cares about well being	Different teaching technique How to differentiate lesson	Time a teacher has to support	Learned to be independent and self-reflect own teaching practice	Challenges faced to reach outstanding Compared to other students Lack of planning to plan own lessons	Unsure of teaching standards or how to complete grade descriptors	Spoke to link tutor Looked at national curriculum and spoke directly to teacher about planning	N/A	Advice and guidance in relation to lesson observation	Built a positive rapport Listened to advice and feedback
PG91	Model teaching, support	How to plan, behaviour management, how	My mentor sometimes presumed I knew	I spoke to other teaching staff, searched	Sometimes I felt that my teacher was not	N/A	Use online resources Spoke to link tutor	I don't think uni can really prepare	Link tutor reassured me, other teachers	I made sure I had as much

		to differentiate	how to do things and therefore I lacked support even when asking for it	online for resources	very approachable so I struggled to ask for more help			you for this	provided support	
PG92	Make student feel welcome Provide support Give encouragement	How to teach lessons that are of a good standard	I did encounter some challenges as I did not feel as if my mentor was very approachable which I feel affected my experience!	I asked for support from friends and other teachers	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Sometimes looked over plans and resources but not always	I tried my best to develop a good relationship with my mentor but I feel that this was difficult at times
PG93	Guide you through the process of getting to	Knowledge and understanding about my pedagogy	A mentor who does not have time/seems willing to	Resilience, knowing I would change placement	See box 3	I assumed mentors were trained to support students	I did not think that was more to do than inform university	N/A	Time, discussion, enthusiasm	Positive attitude, willingness to get stuck in. Being

	know the school Helping you reflect on your placement experiences through questioning and discussion	To critically reflect on my practice more precisely	do any of the above A mentor who wilfully undermines you	Emailed contacts at university			I then just saw the experience through knowing I would change mentors			prepared for mentoring meetings
PG94	Made me realise the subjective nature of teaching Emotional support Feedback for improvement	HER expectations of what an outstanding teacher is	My mentor was unsupportive in terms of planning and arranging lessons She was pregnant and this led to her being off She was part of the SLT (not much time)	My paired partner helped me out as much as possible Teacher next door spent a lot of time helping me. Not his job & unsuccessfully conveying the wrong message.	Yes, my mentor did not have time for me - MISCOMMUNICATION	My observations were affected by the miscommunication. I don't believe she understood my perspective	Not well, it did allow me to build up a very defensive point of view. Though I feel stronger as a person because I was left to my own devices, I've not been able to realise	Making sure the mentor did not have responsibilities that would prevent her being in the classroom	Not a lot- brief conversations Feedback was supportive	Understand that my mentor didn't have the only style of teaching

							what my teaching style is.			
PG95	Explains practice of school Explains/ models behaviour management of a class Gives feedback	The importance of engaging children actively How to come out of my shell	Arranging regular meetings Balanced relationship Communication of plan changes	Coming in early Took advice from link tutor Ensured to ask everyday	Balanced relationship	Partner close to mentor – often not treated as professional equals	Asked to be separate and ensured that there was no reason for being treated differently	Could have ensured that no one was placed in previous work places	My link tutor did not mentor	N/A

Appendix 5: BA Student data

Participant	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
	In your experience what are the three most useful things a mentor does?	What have you learned from your mentor?	What challenges have you encountered during the mentoring process?	How did you deal with those challenges?	Did any aspect of the mentoring process unsettle you?	If so, please explain	How did you deal with that?	How could your programme have prepared you in dealing with that response?	What did your mentor do to support you?	How did you try to ensure that your experience of being mentored was positive?
BA1	Gives you constant support on how to improve your lessons Goes over planning with you to get to know the children Provides you with ample opportunit	How to keep a level head in stressful situations The importance of planning exactly what you want to do or get out of a lesson How good education	Being unsure of how to ask for help Not being given enough teaching time	Having an open conversation with my mentor and getting a teaching timetable in place	Yes-boundaries	Being unsure of what questions could be asked about work without making anyone uncomfortable	I spoke to my link tutor about questions I had and how to approach them with my mentor	By making sure that everyone knew that they could contact a range of people rather than being isolated	My mentor gave me both her email and her phone number to contact her about anything whenever I needed her	I took everything that she said as constructive and then used this as a target for my teaching

	y to engage with the children and to teach	al visits can be in engaging pupils								
BA2	Share their experience with you Guide you through observing Offer advice and ways to improve – remaining positive and giving examples of support	How to engage the class - different methods that work with particular class (through modelling) How to plan to improve on the feedback I was given to reach targets How to use behaviour management methods	I don't feel I really faced any challenges on this placement with my mentor as he was fully supportive. There was the odd occasion where I wasn't finding time to ask questions due to other demands he had	I found other staff to ask or waited till he was available	No	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	He observed me and gave me feedback which was easy to follow. He also gave me targets even when he deemed a lesson as outstanding so I could still push further to maintain this level.	I tried to stay positive on placement – not turning down suggestions and taking on negative feedback I was given as a possible target.

		positively to praise children	with school							
BA3	Models the structures and practices in place such as behaviour management so that you know what the children are used to Steps back to allow you to have the responsibility to take experiences and develop Gives you useful feedback	I have learned that when planning in a nursery you always have to prepare to change/adapt activities to meet individuals' needs I have learned that consistent behaviour management and zero tolerance for rule breaking is	My mentor was only part time and was only available for support on mornings or the occasional afternoon	I would write post it reminders for myself of things I wanted to mention to her in the morning to ensure these were addressed. We also developed a positive working relationship in which I felt comfortable enough to text her for any advice or support	My mentor was pretty open about the stress and pressure that she was under in school and as the school was facing major difficulties functioning effectively she was often very upset. She shared her news about the effects of teaching and these were become	This resulted in her applying for another job and going for an interview under a completely different career path	I tried my best to stay focused on my own responsibilities in class, whilst remaining sensitive to the issues that she was going through. However it was quite eye opening and scary as a trainee to see teaching and the management of	*BLANK*	I did not make her aware of my anxieties	I kept the positive experience and personal development I had made at the forefront of my thoughts. I maintained a positive warming relationship with her and respected her views, thoughts and feedback

	and targets to work towards and develop	essential to gain respect from the children I have learned that making activities as practical and interactive is essential in nursery to secure managem ent			quite negative		school in this way. It obviously did not fill me with confidenc e for my future			
BA4	Guidance Support Encourag ement	Very little as they were not frequently present when I was teaching	No support from mentor	Took advice from Uni, had support from my placement partner	Yes, most of it. Through this I learned that in placement the most important relationshi p a	*BLANK*	I always remained profession al and turned to the Uni for advice as well as my placement partner, friends,	Allow the students to give their own point of views and opinions on situations	Gave me her email address	I remained profession al and positive always

					student can have is with the mentor		relatives who are teachers and one other member of staff			
BA5	Pro- active support- get to know how we work and how this can help Quality feedback- not just good or bad but why it was like that and how to improve Good relationship- make us feel welcomed and at ease so	Different ways to implement behaviour strategies to specific children. The reasons why the class may have been set out in a certain way. Generally how to improve as a teacher	If a mentor has different pedagogical beliefs or there is a school wide ethos that doesn't compliment me. Asking difficult questions about something I have observed was not what I would have done or not	Try and talk to the mentor and see if I can implement some of my pedagogy when teaching. Just got to risk it and ask the questions if it is something you want to know or is important and hope they	Only when I was mentored to be a teacher I wasn't happy being with	It was in a school with a very strict behaviour management policy which I didn't feel was right for my lesson and the mentor was constantly pushing for me to change as a teacher	I stuck to my guns where I could as it was something I wasn't comfortable compromising with. We had discussions and by the end we realised we just had to accept different pedagogies.	I think that my course did a good job in preparing me. This allowed me to know what my beliefs were and what I believed was the best way for me to do this	My best mentoring experiences are where I have a good relationship with them and was able to sit with them and learn how to develop my practice	Try and ensure a positive relationship between myself and a mentor so we can have conversations with them to improve

	we can perform at our best		what I expected	understand						
BA6	Offers support to help integrate into the class Gives positive critical feedback on lesson observations Is available to talk over any issue which may arise	They helped me build confidence and gave in depth feedback in regards to lessons taught, planning and assessment and were available often to ask advice if needed	Overall my mentor was very positive, however, they seemed to spend a lot more time with the other student who was based in the same class and gave them more opportunities than I received	It challenged me to be more proactive in making my lessons as interesting as possible and seek out further opportunities to enhance my placement experience	Only a little	There seems little that could be done about this as they seemed to bond on things we didn't (mainly religion!)	It was fine most placements but became increasingly more obvious over the second half of the weeks	*BLANK*	My mentor was generally very supportive	I asked as many questions as possible which I thought would be beneficial to me and my teaching
BA7	Be approachable Give a clear example	I have been lucky in general to have great role models. I have	In the case of one mentor, I have seen how qualified	By biting my tongue, getting my head down and getting on	Generally, no.	My mentor and I were completely different people, although I did well on	Again, got my head down.	I think Uni did all they could have. I realise It is hard for a University	Gave achievable and regular feedback	Head down

	of how a student teacher is expected to act in a specific school Give positive and constructive feedback throughout placements	learned in 2 of 4 cases how to make a student feel welcome in school and how not to patronise a student. I have learned many interesting behaviour management tactics as well as increased subject knowledge	teachers often level themselves to a position where they can patronise students	with it for 8 weeks		my placement		to not tread on toes when it comes to students in school	Noticed when I was going “above and beyond” Gave a good head start on planning	
BA8	Gives you strengths and weaknesses to build upon Initiates staff-	In depth and valuable information regarding: pedagogy, behaviour managem	Confusion regarding lesson observations and the criteria provided on the	Re-read module handbook and spoke with fellow mentors	No. Myself and my mentor had a very good professional relationship. She	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	Placement briefings gave me useful contact information should we have	Ensured that every aspect of the programme was to both of our satisfaction and	Daily conversations and weekly meetings to discuss my progress and

	student professional relationships Builds confidence about leading a class of 31 children	ent, assessment, moderation, planning, general teaching tips	observation sheets		was very helpful and comforting			any problems	reminded me that I could speak confidently to the head teacher should there be any problems	feelings towards the placement module
BA9	Providing you with information about the class you are in Helping to set targets to ensure the student teacher is improving Support the student be checking plans and	During my assessed second year placement I learnt a lot such as how assessments in a nursery are completed, how important having a good relationship with the parents is	During my first placement of second year I found it difficult to identify who my mentor was. Once I found out who it was it was difficult to get any time with her and so very little progress	I carried on completing the BR@P and tried my best to get on with things	Second year first placement - knocked my confidence and made me question if what I was doing was the right thing to do in terms of going into teaching	*BLANK*	I spoke to ***** **** [link tutor] who was very supportive. He made me feel that I needed to carry on with it	After speaking to year 3 students I soon realised that the school I was at was known to not be very supportive of students so I feel it would be best to not send	Second year- second placement -my mentor was really supportive and understood how I had felt previously. She was really positive but also critical of my teaching	Building up a good relation from the start and maintaining this throughout the placement

	giving feedback	and also positive behaviour management strategies that I had not considered previously	was made during this placement					students there	so that I would make positive changes.	
BA10	Provide constructive feedback Provide support Demonstrate outstanding teaching	Behaviour management techniques Remain calm and controlled	A mentor who was unwilling to support my development in an understanding manner Lack of time to discuss feedback	Asked/offered help within the classroom to demonstrate 'team player' offered to be available during lunchtimes etc for feedback	One mentor complained that she wasn't receiving any further payment after mentoring me	She told me the school were [being paid] and felt that she should receive part of it as it was her time	Simply listened and offered no opinion Link tutor who advised that there was nothing that could be done and she would support if required	*BLANK*	Did offer a degree of support but overall I followed the placement handbook	By maintaining a professional stance throughout
BA11	Guidance and feedback	Differentiation	At the beginning pupil	Observed and questione	We were given a large 80%	Link tutor advised the school	Support from link tutor and	The university should	She freed up time on the	My mentor was fantastic,

	from lessons they have observed Lead by example Show good practice Support with planning and assessment	Setting activities at appropriate levels – challenging more ble children Making activities interactive, practical and fun	behaviour was challenging but with support from my mentor I was able to develop my 'teacher voice' My mentor was supportive throughout the process – no issues	d other teaching staff about methods/strategies of pupil behaviour	teaching workload from the second week which I found challenging and exhausting	we should be teaching a 60% timetable	talked to my mentor making them aware of the placement handbook	clearly define the expectation of the students in terms of teaching and PPA times	timetable to allow planning and assessment	and I built up an excellent rapport. I still keep in touch with her.
BA12	Guide you in direction to become a successful teacher by feedback and advice To reflect on both	My experiences from my mentors has varied. Some experiences were very positive	Mentors assessing differently in same classroom environment or having different opinions on next steps to	I looked at each of their feedback and made sure I addressed the issues before the next session.	Yes	I asked for advice to see if the activity was an appropriate next step to the class teacher, my mentor did not	I made sure on the lesson plans I wrote for assessed sessions were ok with both mentor and class teacher	Not sure	Just verbal advice and some written feedback	Tried not to take it personally, talked and asked lots of questions

	positive and negative teaching practices and offer guidance to improve	and I found they helped me to create appropriate activities to engage and help to make sure lessons were fully inclusive. Other experience was negative, asked to photocopy, laminate, not allowed in staff meetings and was used as cover for external visits	move learning on One mentor would mark outstanding another to same session (observed together) marked requires improvement			usually take this phonics group. After 'ok' of lesson plan mentor said in feedback that they did not think it was an appropriate next step				

BA13	Give both positive and constructive feedback (was not done but I felt it should have been for all 3 placements) Helps with support when planning lessons Gives advice	How when I become a mentor I will offer my students the level of support I feel I should have had	Lack of positive feedback Lack of direction when planning Constructive feedback missing	With support of other student on placement	The constant negative feedback	The lack of being told what you have done well and support changing things that didn't go as well	Had a thick skin! Talked and support with other student who was having similar experiences	More understanding on how to differentiate in a real classroom Opportunity to practise and use smartboards at university	Observed lessons, filled in feedback sheet	Tried to support other student on placement so we were at least there for each other
BA14	Is present for a large proportion of the placement in order to evaluate properly	My mentor was not always available due to her commitment as a headteacher – however,	Mentor not available Being left alone with class teacher, who was great, but not trained	I politely asked for a few moments here and there to discuss my plans/uni expectatio	Not really. I would have liked more time to follow/learn from my mentor as she is a great	*BLANK*	The class teacher I was with did not feel it her place to fill in university forms, but she did	I think if the programme had ensured that I was with my mentor/my mentor was	Observing my lessons and she gave good feedback. She invited me to join meetings	Good communication. I tried to develop my relationship with staff to support my

	Is approachable/happy to receive a student/willing to support progress and learning Is aware of their expectations as a mentor eg paperwork involved	when I did spend time with her it was fantastic. I learned about behaviour management, lesson structures and subject knowledge	as a mentor A lot of my successes were overlooked as I was not with my mentor. Mentor not having the time to complete necessary paperwork.	ns. I asked to be observed by her for my assessed lessons.	teacher. Because she is a headteacher and clearly very busy, I was reluctant to disturb her.		agree to initialling lesson plans to evidence that I had taught lessons	available by checking this first/prior to arrival as I believe my effort was overlooked slightly.	with staff and outside agencies	placement.
BA15	Informal observations as well as informal observations When giving us targets mentor models them to	Most mentors allow us to take risks and learn for ourselves and then they help us see what went well	Many mentors don't see us as BA Year 2 students and they expect a high standard from the outset which is	Consistently ask for feedback to meet their standards It's really hard to try and fit in to an unfamiliar school. It really	TA's have set ways and many discuss us students negatively when we don't follow their way, which could be because	TA's are a very valuable asset with mentoring. Majority of them are more useful than the mentor themselves.	I asked my mentor if there was anything I could improve professionally and kept asking the TAs if I've picked up	It couldn't – I was very worried about this for a while but my partner helped the situation	I didn't raise it as an issue for them to support me. I didn't want to jeopardise professional relationships	Always smiling and asking for feedback to improve constantly Making jokes about my development to break the

	show clearly On first day get us to do a simple task (ie read a story, help with a lesson) to show children we are teachers	Planning is essential	difficult to achieve if this is a new and unfamiliar year group Many mentors don't make you feel comfortable	helped having a partner.	of lack of experience During BR@P my teacher shouted at a pupil unnecessarily and expected me to carry out their punishment by taking them to the headmaster, even though I didn't agree	However they enjoy discussing my flaws within the lesson or how I handled a situation which didn't help me with confidence. But they never came to me about the problem, which could have helped me develop professionally.	'bad habits' but they still didn't tell me			ice, positive relationships are important
BA16	Help and give advice Go to with problems	Classroom management	Dealing with constructive criticism on how to improve	Took advice on board Seek advice	Yes	Hard to always rely on one member of staff as	Emailed link tutor and **** [BA	Ensure link tutor and placement leader are available	Weekly meetings Meetings after every	Maintained a positive relationship with mentor

	– first port of call Model good teaching practice	Successful teaching methods How to differentiate How to improve teaching	and better my own teaching Coping with mentor being absent	and guidance from other members of staff		mentor was off poorly and I didn't have anyone to go to for advice. Especially as relationship not as good with other members of staff	placement lead]	to contact and respond to emails	assessed lesson	and always listened to advice and guidance. If there was a problem ensure it was deal with in appropriate way.
BA17	Guide and support throughout the whole time Review and check your planning Take time to feedback positives	Behaviour management How to adopt a classroom presence How to teach in many different styles	Lack of mentor support – unhelpful and hostile The mentor's understanding of what is expected Mentor being off sick for a	Spoke to university tutors and sought guidance from these – however, not always reliable	Only the lack of support	Sometimes staff off sick – no-one else sure of the commitments Found it hard to work with staff	Stayed as positive as possible and tried to talk to professionals about this	Allow us to understand the role of a mentor in more detail	In one school – regular meetings, feedback, support, guidance, clear understanding and their role and my role	Maintained as best as can a professional and positive relationship with mentor and all other staff. Took on constructive criticism and raised issues in a

	and negatives		long period of time							positive and non-conflict manner
BA18	Supports Educates Advises	During my BA2 block placement I learned a great deal from my mentor. I learned about how to use behaviour management strategies effectively. I was also introduced to a variety of ways I could incorporate some of the more tricky subjects into the classroom	Whilst on my BR@P placement my mentor did not support me in any way. When I offered to help, staying back after school, she didn't want me there. This led to me feeling like the profession I always wanted to pursue was no longer for me. The mentor	I just gave her nothing to complain about, I was there before her every morning and did what was necessary during the school day. Despite this I did not get a very good placement report.	I was unsettled during the BR@P placement because I wasn't getting the support I needed.	On this placement I had hoped I would get the opportunity to teach on a regular basis which she did not enable me to do. In her class I didn't feel like the work I was doing was valued.	I continued my placement because whilst I was not particularly enjoying the placement I felt I was still learning from both the teacher and the children.	I am not sure because had the uni been aware that I was going to encounter such a cold response I don't believe they would have sent me on the placement. Often when emailing the placement staff based in the	Allowed me to support in the class and observe her lessons.	Offered my support whenever I could. I was always in before the teacher setting up her class or sharpening her pencils etc.

		e.g. SMSC	didn't want me in her class and as a result of this I didn't want to be there.					placement office you don't get a reply and it doesn't sound to me when I go on placement that the schools have had much input from the uni prior to us arriving.		
BA19	Allow time to observe them before any planning or teaching is expected Identify areas to develop	Behaviour management Assessment strategies – inc recognising next steps	Teachers not having any interest and me feeling very unwelcome (I think the school had too many students	Ignored her like she did to me Went into next placement with a fresh mind and high expectations Decided to make sure	Yes	I spent most of intervention placement putting up displays, wrapping 'presents from Santa', that kind of thing. This placement	Stayed positive around the children and realised I would have to do portfolio tasks at next placement. I considered		In intervention placement, very little. In assessed placement – everything! She could not have done more – every	By thinking ahead to next placement with hope that I did not have to return.

			coming and going)	I never make a student unwelcome		(other than the short time spent doing BR@P) really demotivated me as I felt unwelcome in the classroom and felt I was a burden when taking children out to complete BR@P	contacting uni but decided it was less stress for me to ignore it all, with the next placement being so close.		aspect of my time was supported thoroughly.	
BA20	Offer support within the lesson and to set up the lesson Guide you to reflect –	Behaviour management strategies The process of weekly planning as	On one occasion I had a mentor that was very quiet and tended not to engage in a lot of	I got on with placement how I usually would, used my initiative and proved	Yes	Only the first week or two when I felt like nobody wanted me to interfere with the	I just carried on, I tried to get to know the staff by asking lots of questions and	I am not really sure on this as it is personal traits in people	Showed me the planning documents and the policies involved in the setting	Appreciating everything she said to me. Valuing feedback.

	in a nice way Be approachable and friendly	opposed to daily Lesson/resource ideas	conversation. I found this hard the first few weeks however, once I started to get used to the setting and grew in confidence she became more friendly – I felt I needed to prove myself first	that I could benefit the setting (I was later asked to stay)		day to day routine	offering to help whenever I could			
BA21	Assisting in planning/looking through planning Always being there for	How to plan and deliver phonics in Y1 How to differentiate and challenge	Mentors not helping/assisting you Mentors not raising issues with you personally	Spoke to other class teacher Discussed with ****** [placement lead]	Yes	When my mentor was unsupportive I felt uncomfortable and upset on placement. I felt the	I didn't due to feeling intimidated. I waited until after the placement and spoke to ******	The link tutor could have been supportive rather than not giving me a chance	The other class teacher (not mentor) ensured she was always there to listen and	Tried to keep a professional relationship with her.

	you/backing you up/supporting you Ensuring you feel part of the team Marking lesson feedback appropriately	pupils when teaching	Mentors being unsupportive	after placement		mentor was unprofessional and unfair. However, the other class teacher was very supportive. I also felt intimidated by the headteacher and felt the mentor sided with him making me feel like I couldn't trust her.	[placement lead]	to explain issues.	help. The mentor did nothing.	
BA22	Lesson observations Offer advice	Different learning strategies Ways to differentiate	Link tutor and school based mentor being too harsh with	I attempted to move passed these challenges and deal with the	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	The programme could ensure that mentors/link tutors are more	Offered support half way through placement	I tried to take on board any advice given

			comments made	comments that had been made.				supportive with their criticisms/ comments		
BA23	Carries out weekly reviews with trainee and provides support on setting targets Demonstrates how to be a positive role model Follows school routines and policies	That it is important to be organised How to make learning more engaging and interactive Behaviour management strategies	When teaching I would often make a few mistakes, however my mentor would always provide me with lots of feedback and support	I would ensure I do not repeat the same mistake again, and act upon my mentor's advice	No	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	My mentor provided me with plenty of advice on how to improve my teaching. She would carry out lesson observations and help me with setting targets for myself.	I ensured I kept a good relationship with my mentor, and followed the way she taught the children and looked up to her as a role model. I attended my weekly review target meetings every week.
BA24	Weekly review meetings	Most recent mentor	During my Year 1 placement	I did only my own weekly	No	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	Offered support and	Took advice on board and

	to help me progress Lesson observations Be there to offer advice/draw on their experiences	was helpful in many ways. She looked over my planning and helped me improve. She gave very honest feedback which made me learn how to improve. She taught me that not all lessons go to plan.	a mentor was never identified which meant I had no feedback or weekly reviews of progress	reviews but was hard to complete during my first placement experience					reassurance when needed	remained professional throughout
BA25	Goes through the school expectations/rules The class rules and	Behaviour management Assessing and marking	Planning lesson plans according to different abilities	Learned from my mistakes Practised planning, trying to	Yes - Not having as much support as I would have liked	When I got properly assessed I was told my lesson was not structured	I began to show and go through my lesson plan before I taught to identify	Give an example of how a lesson plan should look. Maybe	The mentor would give more feedback and read through the lesson	I would try to ensure I talked to my mentor about positive aspects and any

	order, what is the norm within the class Identify children's behaviours and needs		Communication sometimes	differentiate more	More regular feedback	enough, I would have liked my teacher to have gone through the plans of previous lessons and given me more detailed feedback	changes needed	look at a lesson plan and see where improvements can be made to have a clearer understanding	beforehand	issues I may have had
BA26	Identifies areas for progression and supports you with making targets for professional development Models good/outstanding practice	*BLANK*	Mentor favoured other student teacher over myself Personality clashes – mentor did not understand my way of working e.g. planning/t	Approached everyday with an open mind and always put the children's learning first	Yes	The workload of the mentor – having to balance being a classroom teacher, SENCO and mentor to two students at the same time – this	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	Feedback from weekly lesson observations, however, a lot of this feedback was mainly critical and not helpful	By reminding myself that I don't have to return to the same school in the future

			eaching style and pedagogy Communication difficulties – mentor was very busy and could not help/support me all the time			made me feel like a burden when I needed assistance and support				
BA27	Support you throughout the placement experience Provide advice and recommendations to improve teaching/approaches to learning	How to support and teach a class successfully adopting approaches used by her for a number of years that are and have been effective in early years practice	Delivering a plan that meets the children's needs that also meets the targets and expectations of my mentor	I discussed with my mentor and tutor how to overcome these barriers	Not 'unsettle' as such but it was upsetting in the beginning to see that my teaching was not where I wanted it to be	Because I was faced with a difficult class the standard linked to behaviour really affected my WHOLE lesson in a negative light. Eventually I tackled this.	I discussed what strategies (behaviour) I could approach the class with. It took time for me to become assertive in my role but I overcame the barrier by the end	Talk to BA3 students. Inform us of different scenarios and how to react appropriately.	Weekly meetings Analysis of plans Conversations after school with useful advice Providing resources	By maintaining a relationship with my mentor and following her usual in class procedures.

	Ensure targets are being met and review weekly in order to meet standards						of placement.			
BA28	On my BA2 final placement my mentor was extremely supportive. She would give me useful feedback on assessed lessons. Also she would include me in all of the staff meetings	I have learned a lot about different behaviour management techniques. Also my mentor picked out that one of my weak points was time management – she then helped me work through this through a	Some of my previous mentors have been slightly less helpful but this didn't cause too much disruption. Also – when on placement my mentor was changed due to an absence of staff.	This was quickly dealt with as the member of staff was changed	I think that meeting your mentor for the first time is always worrying because you need to get the best out of the opportunity.	*BLANK*	Over time my confidence grew and I did not seem to have any more issues.	I don't think that anything in particular could have been done. However, maybe the selection and pairing of mentor to student could be looked into to make sure they are suited.	She supported my lesson planning and the delivering of different teaching techniques. I feel that all mentors have helped me grow in confidence as they were approachable and helpful.	I remained professional throughout and created a professional relationship throughout.

		variety of techniques.								
BA29	Set realistic, achievable goals (short-term to improve confidence) Gives their own opinion/perspective and offers their own experience as a way of offering support/guidance and as a means of building a relationship Offering support	Organisation is key You will make mistakes throughout your whole career Try different things and if they go wrong it's okay… you'll never know if you don't try it!	My mentor wanting me to become a version of her – a mini me If I did not deliver a lesson in the way she would she would not rate the lesson as highly	Almost mimic her way of teaching in order to achieve the grades I wanted but when she wasn't there, implement more of my teaching style and feel more myself when teaching which improved my confidence as this in fact engaged children more than	Yes	It sometimes felt a little bit challenging i.e. my mentor thinking I knew more than I did and often taking a step back and not offering a lot of support.	Admitted that I was lacking knowledge and confidence to which she suggested I do some research	Told us more clearly about the role of the mentor – when it is ok to seek guidance from them and when it should be on YOU e.g. finding the balance of support and not spoon feeding or leaving you to your own devices	Helped with my lesson plans Gave feedback on my lessons	Keeping organised Responding to her emails in a timely manner Offering my time to help with her work

				when striving to implement her way of teaching e.g. use of voice, behaviour management strategies, lesson ideas.						
BA30	Helps you to set appropriate goals and targets Provides you with individual targets Provides you with lots of opportunities to teach a range of subjects	The importance of considering and reflecting on what has gone well To be flexible and listen to the children even if it doesn't follow your	The only challenges I encountered were at the beginning, my mentor was unsure if what she was supposed to write in the documentation as she had not been a	I spoke to my mentor about what was to be filled in, in the weekly review and she liaised with another member of staff who had been a mentor before.	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	My mentor was very supportive throughout my placement and provided me with all the documentation that I required promptly which had a positive impact on my teaching	I tried to ensure that I built a good relationship with my mentor by ensuring that I had all my lesson plans done by the start of the week so that she was able to see what I

	and whole class/group activities	lesson plan	mentor before						at the beginning of the placement as I knew what level all the children were at. She was also really approachable at all times so I was confident to discuss with her any problems I had.	would be teaching. I also ensured that I was professional at all times.
BA31	Provides positive feedback, along with constructive criticism Allows you to know exactly where you	I have learned about various teaching methods and how to apply them throughout lessons,	My school-based mentor was rather confused with how she was supported to grade me ie as a	I informed my school-based mentor of how I was supposed to be graded and she contacted	Yes	It was difficult for me as my class teachers both wanted to be my mentor which made it	I arranged a meeting with both of the class teachers and we talked through what would be	*BLANK*	She spoke with my teachers and they also came to an agreement	I formed a relationship with my mentor and other members of staff who were observing me and I ensured I

	are as a student teacher, developmentally Almost shows you how it's done and shares their expertise/ experiences	and with particular children. I have also learned how to challenge children to an appropriate extent. I have learned a lot about inclusion as my last placement had a lot of interventions and such in place. Behaviour management and planning.	teacher or as a second year student. This caused a problem as I believe that I was not being graded correctly until my link tutor cleared this up. Also, my mentor didn't feel that the communication was particularly strong.	my link tutor about both of these issues.		rather difficult for all of us to see progression. I felt as though I wasn't organised as things weren't getting done.	more beneficial for me during my assessed weeks. We decided that I would only have the 'Monday – Wednesday' teacher			had a professional attitude.
BA32	Give you opportunities to teach	Strategies for teaching and	If your mentor doesn't do what the uni says	I looked at it myself but it isn't	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	Weekly meetings were really about how	Keep a good relationship with them,

	Feedback that moves you forward, not all positive/negative	questioning That if there's a problem it's ok to speak up Behaviour management	they should do. My mentor refused to do the grade descriptor booklet as she said I should fill it in	highlighted now					I felt it was going and what I needed next to progress. This was really helpful and done in a positive way. When having an issue she discussed it with me and we came up with a solution that best suited me.	listen to feedback and use it in lessons.
BA33	Gives both positive and negative feedback with areas	About having a focus group during lessons and relying on	Having the mentor as a head teacher was difficult as they were not always	Persistence – asking multiple times for feedback on anything that	Yes	Mentor not always being available or in school	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	Helped with areas I struggled with and talked through some lesson	Keep a good relationship with them. Responding to

	to improve on Should be available to talk to about issues Can go to them for advice	TA's and other support and the children to get on with the work set	available, sometimes received feedback from an assessed lesson the next week, after being assessed again	happened in order to improve before receiving feedback sheets. Asking class teacher/TA/other student what they thought of a lesson					plans with me to prepare for link tutor visit	feedback however possible.
BA34	Set goals/targets Restore, build make opportunities to build confidence Providing opportunities	How to carry out/lead in the classroom. All mentors have helped guide and push me to deliver stimulating lessons.	I have not experienced any problems at all. All mentors went above and beyond what they needed to do to help me. The only challenges were the	*BLANK*	No, I felt my mentors knew exactly what I was going through	It would be good if mentors had more communication with link tutors	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	Saw me as a member of the staff team Reviewed lesson plans In depth feedback on lessons Asked me what I felt confident to do but	Have all folders and information printed and ready for mentors Interacted in a positive way and talked about lesson ideas,

			actual filling in of grade descriptors, teachers did it very well but it was the communication from university that was a challenge and what was expected to be filled in						also pushed me Advice on focus children Going through lesson observations and restoring confidence if it did not go well Behavioural strategies Involving me in whole school meetings and planning Support Giving me contacts	offering to do more than just what was expected Discussing needs of children Made sure I stayed behind and got fully involved with all members of the year group team

									Asking how I was coping with workload	
BA35	Provides opportunities – both for set tasks we have and for extra Makes you feel welcome in the class Provides feedback in a supportive and constructive way	Advice about planning and behaviour management which I was able to use and practise	I had a mentor who did not make me feel welcome and would not allow me to carry out activities and so it was difficult to get any tasks done	I spoke to my link tutor who spoke to my mentor and they agreed to let me carry out a few activities	Yes	With the same mentor, I found it difficult to feel comfortable or talk to her as she appeared unapproachable and made it feel like I was bothering her	I tried to use my initiative wherever possible and tried my best to appear polite and positive throughout the placement. I also spoke to my link tutor.	*BLANK*	All other mentors have been very helpful and provided me with opportunities to be a part of class and school routines	I tried to build a positive relationship with my mentor.
BA36	Discuss the advantages and disadvantages from	How to adapt to the children I was teaching	Mentors (some) have not been informed on why I	Tried to inform them with the best of my knowledge	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	(Year 2 mentor) continuously supported and	Formed a working relationship with my mentor during my

	each lesson that I carried out, identifying my strengths and weaknesses Suggested ways in which I can improve within the classroom Is there to talk to, if any problems occurred	in order for me to have them engaged and on task throughout the lesson	was there i.e. BR@P or have little knowledge on what their role was and what the documentation was	on what the documentation required them to do					encouraged my lesson ideas from a range of subjects. They ensured that I was well equipped with resources and staff to ensure that all children were focussed and working. My mentor gave me daily feedback whether this was through a weekly review, written	2nd year block placement. They were supportive, efficient and understanding of what I was required to do whilst there.

									targets or verbal	
BA37	Lesson Planning Observation and Feedback General explanation of how the school/class worked	How to effectively teach whole class/small groups How best to manage difficult behaviour How to plan a series of lessons and adapt accordingly	Working with another student and feeling little interaction or support from them	Encouraged by the mentor to continue on as I was doing	No	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	Engaged in all aspects of school life Asked questions and sought all the support I needed
BA38	Give feedback on lesson observations Guide you through how to plan lessons	How to run a class on a day to day basis Good practice/ideas to be used in the future	Lack of knowledge on the mentor's behalf of how the university paperwork should be filled in. Mentor	I tried to explain to the best of my knowledge how they should be done	No	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	I communicated with my mentor on a daily basis and any questions or issues I had we dealt with

	for the particular class Be someone who is easily approachable to ask for advice	How to work effectively with other staff in the classroom and across the school	said guidance from the university would have been beneficial							them quickly. This included lesson plans and how to differentiate appropriately
BA39	Supports and gives advice to me whilst going through placement Gives honest but productive and constructive feedback Provides a familiar and friendly	From observation of my past mentor I have the ways in which I wish to teach as well as the ways which would not work best for me. My mentor also taught me the ways	Through a collection of placements I have had mentors who both inspired me and others who were not as supportive. Consequently, challenges from this were not forming a	By independently trying to get the most out of my placements.	During my 8 week block placement my mentor would often have upsetting or emotional moments due to the headteacher and confusion between him, my mentor and our purpose on the	As we were meant to be teaching 60% of lessons in English and maths the mentor would often become stressed with having 4 students in a class (2 PGCE) as well as the Head	Multiple students reported this to the link tutor who then spoke to the school. After this we had a very 'stern' talk from the training co-ordinator saying we should have gone	In my perspective it seems we should email link tutors with any problems and therefore didn't feel we had done anything wrong.	Mentor was always very supportive and aimed to always enable us to fulfil our potential.	*BLANK*

	face when needed	in which I can maintain a professional yet welcoming relationship with the children.	relationship with these mentors in order to fulfil my purpose at placement.		placement.	then explaining we were not allowed to teach lessons in the mornings and therefore not teach English and maths	to him first.			
BA40	Provides feedback and constructive criticism in order for me to improve my practice and give me the best opportunities. Explain their own	Different teaching techniques Effective behaviour management Being very flexible	Some, I felt, weren't critical enough. I think possibly some criticism was sugar coated and this wasn't helping me to learn from my mistakes	I prompted for more constructive criticism.	I was nervous during my first observed full class teaching but it got easier. I think when the mentor would write things down as you were	It is so because you then begin to think of what you just did for them to write something down and if it was good or bad which then puts you off your teaching	I just tried to keep my focus on the children.	*BLANK*	Helped me improve where I needed it and often gave me positive feedback and reinforcement and without this I doubt I would have been able to	*BLANK*

	experience and teaching techniques which I can adapt or learn from.		and improve my practice fully		teaching is unsettling.	for a while.			have the confidence to teach being observed.	
BA41	Feedback on lessons Helping me to get evidence for my Standards Giving me time to do lessons and go through personal development with me	Their teaching pedagogy – start to adapt some of theirs Planning – how they do it Feedback on lessons and suggestions on how to improve	Timings when doing lessons and taking too long on the carpet Differentiation in every lesson	Talked through with mentor and tried out solutions (e.g. timers)	No – she always spoke to me to make sure I was confident before making me do anything	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	Gave me loads of opportunities Gave me honest feedback on lessons and lesson plans Weekly review Final placement evaluations	Good relationship with the mentor from the beginning Taking on challenges faced with (e.g. taking assembly) Always offering to help her
BA42	Gives me advice on how to be a	Effective strategies for behaviour	Not agreeing with certain	I learnt from the challenges. There	In the 8 week block placement	However, mentors in other placement	I kept a positive attitude for the	Either sent me to a different school or	With regards to teaching his	I tried to get as much advice as I

	successful teacher Provides me with constructive criticism so that I can improve and know how to Gives me confidence and makes me feel comfortable to teach	management The importance of structure and organisation Also from one specific mentor I have learnt a lot from his mistakes and I know the type of teacher I do not want to be	methods e.g. ripping out children's work as I could see the negative effect this had on the children's confidence	was not a lot I could do except to give the children praise and take a different approach when I taught.	, yes, as it got to the point where I wouldn't know what mood my teacher would be in – it could be a very negative environment at times	s never unsettled me	children, as did the rest of the staff	a different class as I didn't feel like I was wanted there	feedback was good as he gave me constructive criticism and I knew how to improve and it worked	could and made sure that I learnt from both the positives as well as the negatives
BA43	Gives you guidance Answers questions	Everything, she was an outstanding role model and	Being too hard on myself, she advised me to be	I took on board all advice and was more	Leaving!	I was so settled in the setting, with the staff and	Maintained an open mind, and professionalism, in moving to	*BLANK*	Gave great advice and support and	I tried my best in everything and tried to give back what

	Supports in every way	I will use everything I have learnt from her into the far future	more positive	open-minded		so comfortable with my mentor that it was hard to leave	new settings		targets for my future	she was giving me
BA44	Provides information about the school, the class and classroom topics and giving suggestions and ideas for using within the classroom Providing feedback and ways to improve from lesson observations	I learnt some methods of teaching I liked and some behaviour management strategies but also ones that I wouldn't use in future. Learnt to be more prepared for lessons, not just with planning but as in	Having to ask for information and resources continually – often for university files – which put a lot of pressure on the mentor. Often the mentor wouldn't understand what was required of them and of us	The mentor themselves was aware that we did require a lot of information but I still did just have to deal with asking for a lot. We had to go through the handbook given from university to try to explain what was expected	No	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	By giving constructive criticism and positive feedback. Also trying to provide me with as much information as I needed.	By trying to maintain a positive relationship with them and asking for as much help and feedback as possible, to try and improve my teaching within their classroom

		having tables set up and ready.	whilst on placement	of us but it still wasn't quite clear						
BA45	Feedback on lessons Discussing lesson plans Suggest targets	How to improve/adapt activities Behaviour management that worked best within their class	Given responsibility of teaching large group in nursery, many different abilities and difficult to engage as lots of support needed.	Spoke with mentor to arrange for college student to support group so children could be given more help.	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	Weekly reviews, lots of opportunities to have responsibility within the classroom, feedback	Tried to create a positive relationship with mentor, as well as the TAs and the children
BA46	Supports my own teaching Lesson plans – improve Answers questions I have	How I want, or may not want, to teach Different strategies	Link tutors Workload – collecting all the data	Made sure my files were up to date Kept on top of the workload	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	Sometimes my placement mentor didn't know what was expected i.e. teaching times/PPA	Very helpful, gave positive/constructive feedback. Discussed what areas to improve.	Make good relationships with teachers. Listen to feedback and work on it. Improve

								. Packs too big – condense so it's easier for busy teachers to scan.	Other links.	
BA47	Answer any queries I may have Supports my teaching i.e. gives me feedback or tips Checks my lesson plans and tells me how to improve	What teacher I want to be Behaviour management strategies	My workload has been large	Ensured that I had everything planned and stayed on top of my work so I didn't get weighed down	No, I found all my experience was good and helpful	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	My mentor was very helpful. She always gave me feedback and advice. She gave good criticisms and praise. She shared her knowledge of where to go next.	I built a good relationship with my mentor and ensured I was helpful throughout placement.
BA48	Allows you to settle into the school	Ideas for lessons and how to	Not agreeing 100% with	Discussed the feedback in more	No, my mentor always	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	A lot of positive feedback as well as	I listened to the feedback and put it

	environment Support and feedback Gives you ideas	structure them	a piece of feedback	detail during weekly meetings	supports me				always giving me ideas and suggestions	into practice to make sure that I made the most of the support
BA49	Gives time to settle in and follow daily routines Gives students space to teach or manage behaviour etc Support student by not undermining or patronising which allows children to gain respect	How to plan for EYFS (continuous provision, medium, weekly and daily plans) How to deal with disruptive or children who over react when being told off	One mentor would hear me telling a child off for instance and instead of asking me what happened would ask the child and tell them off again, felt like I was being undermined. Teachers not	*BLANK*	Just what I have mentioned about teachers not respecting the work you have to do.	Either not giving time to allow activities to be carried out or switching groups or changing who I had planned for. Some teachers take advantage of the work (i.e. when doing BR@P I spent most days just	Tried to find other jobs to do so I wouldn't have to read all day. Spoke to teacher about groupings.	Brief teachers more – there is only so many times a student can talk to a mentor if they don't listen	Gave feedback Some stepped back and allowed me to feel like the teacher	Tried to help in class Being organised with lessons

	and follow instructions by student		respecting the work you have to carry out.			reading with everyone in the class)				
BA50	Settle you into the school Support you Share their experiences and knowledge	Importance of communication and how everyone needs to be updated about children and their development	If it hasn't been made clear who my mentor is	Asked class teacher	No – I have always had a supportive mentor	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	Share lesson plans/review my lesson plan Suggest strategies that may work best for certain children	Build a good relationship where you could trust and rely on the mentor. Listen and take action on any suggestions
BA51	Gives the student the feeling that they are wanted and welcomed into their classroom	From my last mentor I have learned that kindness, acceptance and fun are some of the most	Sometimes, I found it hard to ask my mentor for any written evidence or for him to make the time to fill out my	I just had to give myself a bit of a wakeup call and I thought that, no matter what, these forms had	No as he made me feel welcomed	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	Our programme (pre-placement lectures) teach us to always remain professional	My mentor did a lot to support me throughout my placement. He communicated with me, throughout	By being organised, enthusiastic, well-mannered and professional and by always being open to new

	and into their team Allows the student to make little mistakes and recognises that they were once in the student's shoes and isn't too hard on them, helps them along Communicates well with the student, not only on a professional level but from a personal level also	important things to bring out in a classroom. He made me feel wanted and a part of the team and taught me not to be so hard on myself. I always put myself down and thought that I had done worse that I actually had and he made me see that I was actually working at 2:1/1 level towards the end of	forms, highlight my Standards file. Verbal communication was absolutely no problem.	to be signed and professionally reminded him about them.					, very openly and enthusiastically as if I were his equal, not just a Year 2 student teacher. He was understanding of my illness, I was only off for a day or two but he was very understanding and let me take it easy for the rest of the week. He made sure to answer all my questions and	responsibilities. I obviously took interest in the children, him, the support staff and other school staff and visibly enjoyed being in the school.

		my placement. I have learned to have confidence, look after my health and persevere.							doubts and reassured me throughout.	
BA52	1. Emotionally support during lessons and in meetings 2. Offer assistance in lessons 3. Share experience and assist in planni	Organisation skills, different ways of planning Getting to know the children quickly	I had 2 mentors during an assessed placement who did not communicate well, had different expectations and set different targets for the week, to the point where one teacher told me to ignore one	I tried to address the lack of communication by talking to them together on a Wednesday when they were both in but they insisted on doing observations separately	One teacher on an assessed placement was particularly unapproachable and unfriendly. She set me targets which were long term and would come with a great deal of experience,	These targets were about my voice and would come with more confidence over time. They were not constructive. Neither was the observation from the headteacher which made me question whether I	I asked for more help in differentiating and planning work during meetings and having more time teaching the class	They could have been easier to contact. Multiple times myself and another student attempted to contact the person at university who we had been told to, and we never got	The other teacher, who I had a better relationship with, encouraged me that I could do this course and offered me a lot more assistance	I tried to develop a good relationship with the mentors and children, giving a good impression on the staff so that they were willing to advise and help.

	ng/differentiation when needed		of the other teacher's targets		meaning that a lack of progress was demoralising	could continue.		a response		
BA53	Support academically and emotionally Act as a bridge between university and school expectations – how are these manageable and realistic Assist by ensuring planning and assessment are ok	I have had a variety of mentor experiences throughout my teacher training journey. I have had great experience with some – very supportive and co-operative. Some were not so helpful but this allowed me to	One mentor was very 'old school' and hated change or mess in her classroom. Being in EYFS most of my ideas were creative and arguably 'messy', she disapproved and I had to follow her plans	I found it very frustrating. I reasoned with her and agreed to have 'messy Fridays' where I could carry out my activities.	I found some experiences to be difficult. In first year I was in a class with 2 part-time teachers, one was helpful whilst the other resented me being in her class.	This made me very anxious and at times I wanted to leave altogether.	With the support of peers, friends and family I was determined to finish first year, trying to deal with the difficulties I faced.	I contacted my school training co-ordinator [placement module leader?] who was equally unhelpful. Possibly discussing how 'bad placements' still help you develop	*BLANK*	I ensured I took as much as possible out of the experience. Although it was stressful at times I knew not all mentor experiences would be so negative.

		develop tolerance skills and the ability to carry on.	sometimes.							
BA54	Supports me as a teacher Offers guidance on how to improve Respects me as a teacher – not a student	Different strategies that can be used	Receiving feedback that I don't entirely agree with	Accepted the feedback and took guidance on board	Being assessed on teaching	It can be difficult to take criticism, even if it will benefit my teaching	Learn to accept guidance and support	-	Explained how to improve and gave me tips	Accepting and appreciating the support given and putting it into practice
BA55	Consistently offers support and guidance Models behaviour management and teaching styles	How to specifically devise a lesson plan specific to the children's needs and abilities, in terms of attainment	Which behaviour management techniques are most significant How to keep the correct	Through support provided by my mentor as well as another fellow university colleague	At first the expectations of deadlines to be met consistently at a good standard	This was simply a teaching curve that I needed to adapt to in order to progress	Constantly ask questions so as much information could be gathered Always sought the support of	Focus on lesson plans in more detail and more on what is required of you during placement	Model what was required and easier ways to go about creating lesson plans	Constantly feeding back and forth through emails with the mentor my ideas and lesson plan drafts

	Reflects on strategies used throughout teaching	and progress	pace of a lesson				those around me			
BA56	Offers support whenever needed Gives you as many opportunities to develop in the classroom as possible Gives feedback on areas you do well in/need improving	Different teaching and behaviour management strategies How the school day runs day to day and the role they have	Maintaining organisation of files and resources Making sure activities I had created were appropriate	Communicating with the mentor. They were very approachable and took a lot of time to make sure I felt comfortable and confident	No	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	Gave me suggestions and feedback Model certain lessons Assisted during my lessons	Making sure I had everything that was necessary for the placement, resources, plans, files etc. so that the mentor could check anything if they needed to
BA57	Supports in teaching	Teaching practice skills	Lack of support/fe	Asked my mentor for more specific	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	The programme advised us to	Provided me with planning (medium	Accept any feedback given and

	experience Supports in planning Feedback on teaching	Behaviour management strategies Planning information/guidance	edback/targets Unable to access all planning	feedback – what could be improved Asked questions around teaching/planning				accept any feedback and take any feedback as positive. Ask questions to mentor	term) to allow me to plan my own lesson from this. Involved me in after school activities such as staff meetings and parents' evenings	to plan future lessons/delivery of lessons around this. Have an open minded approach/[be?]adaptable
BA58	Supports your teacher training Supports in planning Provides you with targets and feedback	What my strengths and weaknesses are as a student teacher Strategies to cope with different situations and pupils	Lack of negative feedback/targets Too much positive feedback (nothing to work towards)	Ask questions and ask for specific targets or improvements for the future	No	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	The programme could have provided more opportunities to be given specific targets when it comes to teaching rather	Provided me with their contact details so I could email her my plans/concerns and so she could help me with this	Created a good relationship with my mentor and respected her opinions and advice and took these on board

								than just targets for assignments		
BA59	Helps to guide you into knowing the school/class Shows you the different ways to monitor and assess Supports your planning and delivering of lessons	How much planning and assessing needs to be done continuously in order to support pupil progress	Trying to adapt my teaching to suit the mentor's way and meet their expectations	I tried bringing in my own teaching techniques whilst consulting with the mentor to ensure she was happy with this	No	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	The programme encouraged us to ask questions when unsure and be open to positive/negative feedback	She regularly gave me feedback and targets to meet She also encouraged me to take control of the class on my own	I took any feedback/targets positively and used these to plan and better my teaching This showed I was appreciating the feedback
BA60	Assesses the delivery of my lessons	How to further develop specific key stages such as	Successfully creating lessons that met the abilities of	I dealt with this by re-evaluating my activities/lessons.	When my lesson plans were discussed and the	I felt that with putting so much time and preparatio	I cried, then reminded myself on why I wanted to	By informing us more in placement how it's normal to	By providing me with useful advice	By listening carefully to her advice

	Provides constructive criticism	reception children's learning Skills to improve the teaching and delivery of my lessons	each child. Lower to higher	Also, re-evaluating my questioning techniques.	implication with them [not?] meeting the National Curriculum standard and the children's needs were not met	n into my lessons, for complexities/implications found, I found this disheartening	be a teacher and this dishearten turned into motivation. I motivated myself into becoming a better teacher.	make mistakes as long as you learn from them		
BA61	Gives lesson feedback to ensure a continuous improvement Makes you feel comfortable in their class Assists with planning/g	Methods of how to cope with the pressure of being observed A great deal of Early Years approaches Assessment and organisati	Nerves/confidence Poor time management – balancing doing books and planning lessons	I managed to overcome them gradually – however, confidence will remain an issue	No	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	Build a strong professional relationship which allows honest communication – if I was uncomfortable or doing something wrong –

	eneral advice throughout the day	on in Early Years								we'd tell each other
BA62	Provides personal contact details (easily contacted) Provides a welcoming environment (I was introduced to teachers/other classes/taken on a tour) Provides regular feedback even non-assessed lessons and tries to find some positives	I feel I gained a lot from this mentor as she provided me with insight to her own experiences. She introduced me to the everyday working classroom and gaining confidence working within it. I have also learned a lot about differentiation and creativity	Disagreements with opinions	My mentor and I always spoke to each other and were honest if we disagreed with any aspects within the classroom. I feel this helped to build a positive relationship.	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	My mentor was readily available at all times to provide assistance and guidance. She provided honest feedback with clear targets and I feel my teaching developed massively.	I ensured to listen to all advice provided by my mentor and ask any questions if I did not understand. Aiming to please at all times kept a positive atmosphere.

	so that you're not totally disheartened	within such a diverse setting.								
BA63	1. Feedback from observations explaining how you could improve 2. Explains what you're required to do on placement i.e. when you're teaching or jobs to carry out 3. Makes you feel welcome and part of the class	Ways in which I could improve my teaching, the roles which are required of you as a teacher and a lot of information regarding planning	The lack of time a mentor has due to their own workload. Sometimes they're unaware of what to fill out and how often, often just wanting things signed off and completed as quickly as possible	Sometimes meeting for very short times or listening to oral feedback and writing that down. Telling them what sheets to fill out and giving them examples from Blackboard.	Feeling awkward/a burden	Feeling awkward/a burden when wanting the weekly meeting sheets filled in or the grade descriptor due to their heavy workload and no time (not at every placement)	Met at any little time she had/told oral feedback and wrote that in weekly review meeting sheet myself	Make sure schools are aware of this time to meet with students	Said always available if any questions/ allowed us to look at previous planning for ideas. Access to any resources we needed and allowed us to teach any subject we wanted	By listening to advice given and show understanding of their heavy workload

	& school to be respected by pupils									
BA64	Supported me with any school issues Advised me in how to move forward and develop Helped me manage my time	Effective teaching methods for phonics and mathematics Behaviour management strategies	Keeping the children engaged during lessons and maintaining their interests Getting the children to sit still and listen	Created a seating plan, made sure children who sat and spoke weren't sat together and those which disturbed or needed support had an adult next to them	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	She provided support when I asked for help, in most cases she told me to do what I want and give it a go. This made it difficult to access her support all the time.	I always asked questions and for help. I also made sure I made the teacher aware of what I should be doing and how they could allow this
BA65	Honest advice relating to feedback from lesson observations/general	Ways to manage challenging behaviour in a class How to improve	Lack of knowledge and training in the aspect of grade descriptor booklets	If I was unsure myself, get in contact with one of the placement	Yes	Not at every placement but some mentors would not make time for	Met at any possible time suitable with teacher or took verbal	Stress the importance and awareness for this to be completed	Gave me resources Constructive criticism	Building up a positive relationship with my mentor Taking advice on

	observations thus reasoning behind feedback Explains reasoning behind what happens in a school day	certain aspects of my teaching	and how to fill these in correctly	/university team Share what we have been told at university		meetings etc, as a result feeling like a burden on the teacher	feedback and put that into a weekly review meeting sheet	while on placement	Praise and encouragement	board and made the most of opportunities she gave me
BA66	Constructive criticism Always giving you ideas of how to improve your practice Gives you the opportunity to try your own ideas out, even if	That it is okay to make mistakes in school and that this is the best way to learn You may be a different teacher to them but it does not mean that you are bad	Trying to adapt what you know to their style of teaching (routines) Adapting my own behaviour management strategies Being consistent in keeping the	Trying out new behaviour management strategies Reflecting on my own practice and trying new strategies to help me to improve	From taking her harsh criticism to begin with	My mentor's personality allowed her to be harsh when confronting you. However, this was something you adjusted to as the placement went on.	Listening to her thoughts, taking the criticism well and changing so that she could see I was listening and taking her ideas on board to become a better trainee teacher	*BLANK*	She gave me resources to help me New ideas that worked with the children Encouraged me positively to continue what I was doing	Take every opportunity she gave me Put myself out to help with everything in class and my own time outside of the classroom

	they don't go to plan Behaviour management strategies		children focussed							
BA67	Ensuring the placement is going well and can address any concerns Keeping on track with files Helped me to manage my time	Behaviour management strategies Effective time management	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	Was available to answer any questions that I had	Communication between the mentor and myself – emails updating on how the placement was going
BA68	1. To make time for the student to talk to them and	Relevant behaviour management techniques and how best to	I did not find any challenges with my mentor	N/A	A lack of communication between the training co-	Sometimes key information sent by the university was not	I offered advice as far as I could but my Link Tutor cleared up	Perhaps more information on what was required of our	Provide help in designing and creating resources	Build a professional relationship with my mentor in which we

	ask questions 2. Provide constructive criticism from observations 3. To be supportive in your planning	apply them The most effective ways to plan and assess			ordinator (who was the main contact between the school & university) and my mentor	passed to my mentor and she was sometimes unsure of how best to fill out evaluations and grade descriptors	any misconceptions during his visit	mentors so I could have helped her more	Provided me with relevant information about the class I was teaching Allowed time for me to ask questions and digest information	were both comfortable working with each other To always ask questions and take all feedback as good feedback
BA69	1. Provide emotional and academic support 2. Ensure that I am comfortable in the classroom 3. Build on my learning/teaching and help	Behaviour management techniques – to be strong and very firm to start with and then it is easier to control the class in a more relaxed way. To	One mentor was unsure of the expectations of mentoring and the placement. At times it got confusing	Contacted university tutors and arranged a day to sit and chat about expectations with my mentor	No	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	Further placement lectures on what is expected and what we need to achieve on placement rather than a general overview	Offered to talk about anything at any time – even through text Always looked happy to see me and have me	I aimed to always stay positive and take constructive criticism as a good thing I asked for help when it was needed

	with anything I need	be positive about potential setbacks.							helping out Introduced me to all staff – included as staff	
BA70	I feel that my mentors at school have been useful in equipping me with knowledge of the school as a whole and routines/key info. They have provided crucial support in planning and assessment. Though I have	Her own teaching style – stemming from an excellent rapport and understanding of the children Behaviour management Dealing with SEN, parents and other agencies (she was the SENCO)	On one placement my mentor wasn't familiar with the expectations of what she had to do in the mentor role and was therefore unable to give as much support as I needed in my first ever placement	I tried to contact uni and link tutor for support but no-one got back to me. I just had to try and fit in by doing what the other members of staff were doing	Only where I went in and my mentor felt uncomfortable as she didn't know what the expectations of the role were	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	Increased communication and clarity with the mentors prior to students going in	My BA2 mentor was outstanding and supported me with everything before challenging me when I felt comfortable in my teaching by taking a step back and letting me 'get on with it'	Constant communication, building a positive relationship and displaying enthusiasm

	found their lesson observation feedback to be the most important.	General professional identity – how to act etc. Assessment and organisation								
BA71	Lets you see their planning and involves you in the planning process of the school Gives you feedback that you can work on and use to improve skills Gives you good opportunities to take	My mentor most recently gave me a full insight into every expectation of her role as a teacher rather than only showing what is expected as a forward [not sure what's meant by this?] e.g. being	Time management may be an issue sometimes as a mentor's main role and priority is their class	I offered to do some jobs on the side when I could so that my mentor had free time she could spend it with me rather than doing these jobs	Learning the amount of work I had to do	There is lots of paperwork involved in placement	My mentor was understanding with the amount of paperwork I had to do and helped when possible and gave me time when needed	More time before paperwork is due/less paperwork to focus alone on placement tasks	Always offered help Gave me access to anything I required	Creating a good relationship meant my mentor and I worked as a team

	over, teach and plan your own lessons	shown 'behind the scenes'								
BA72	Gives you beneficial observations of your teaching and offers constructive feedback Talks through documents or strategies you are unsure about	Take all feedback as support to improve your teaching practice	Not personally knowing the mentor/a familiar face thus no prior relationships/did not know me as an individual	Build relationship with the mentor, express my learning strategies implemented thus why I did something the way I did	No	N/A – no aspect unsettled me	N/A – no aspect unsettled me	Possibly meet the link tutors prior to placement to recognise their face to make the observation/discussions more relaxed	Made me feel comfortable and confident when talking to the mentor by accepting my views and supporting my needs	I built a positive relationship with all mentors Ensured I implemented all tasks as required to prevent time wasting
BA73	Supports different planning techniques Gives you a wide [variety?]	A range of behaviour management techniques to implement	Mentor finding time for weekly meetings	Finding most appropriate time relating to mentor (different days and times) as	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Reflected on plans, gave me a range of lesson ideas, advised me on areas I	I built a positive relationship with all mentors to ensure they would support on areas I

	of experiences/opportunities to observe lessons Makes you feel at ease when delivering a lesson	in my practice Exciting lesson ideas		she was deputy head and had a lot of commitments					could research for assignment, supported my ongoing pedagogy, gave me lots of time to teach lessons, gave me confidence through praise	found difficult. I carried out all tasks I was asked to and remained professional throughout, this allowed a positive experience when being mentored
BA74	Supports with planning Answers questions about teaching/children in the class/school	Teaching strategies, how to differentiate effectively, practical maths ideas, roles within the school, behaviour managem	The mentor finding time to highlight the grade descriptor	She took it home on a night to ensure it wasn't rushed. This allowed more time to fill it out.	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Supported me when creating lesson plans, read them and suggested changes. Allowed me to complete assessment with her	Remained positive and professional throughout, took on feedback and acted upon it. I took initiative in school and

	Offers teaching methods	ent strategies, how to effectively deploy support staff							support. Went through feedback of my teaching straight after	became involved with the wider school life.
BA75	Reassure expectations Provide feedback Answer queries	Teaching methods, behaviour management strategies, professional identity, confidence as a professional	Using what I have learnt to independently take on parts of their role	Effectively planning and good communication with my mentor	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Provided me with opportunities to develop professionally, help find resources, answer questions, provide constructive criticism, encourage my school voice/opinion, involve me within wider responsibilities	By ensuring that I became a positive asset to the school 'team' instead of being an added stress. Independence and using initiative ensured that I could be self-sufficient but still enquire if I

										had questions
BA76	Provides initial resources and ideas for lessons Guidance and support – makes you feel welcome and part of the class Goes out of their way to help you	First year – behaviour management techniques, positive praise, how to handle a KS2 class, how school life works, the NC in depth, potential lesson ideas/topics, how to deal with difficult situations	I have been really lucky with both of my assessed placements as I have had two very supportive mentors who really looked out for me/helped me on my teaching journey	N/A Not been in this situation	No – I felt like they took their time and effort to guide and support me. Constant contact/spoke on a weekend Reassuring and professional	N/A	N/A	N/A	Provided me with more resources than needed, professional, detailed feedback, welcoming, made an effort, believed in me, pushed me further than expected, friendly	Made sure I made a good impression, went out of my way to do things for my mentor, always asked questions, accepted feedback and always used it

BA77 [Is BA77 talking about the link tutor?]	Feedback Encouragement Provides support/resources/makes time	I was given guidance, in all honesty I learned more from my teacher than my mentor due to the fact that my mentor only visited once	I never had any challenges or problems with my mentor	N/A	No	N/A	N/A	In general the programme needs to be focussed on more real life experiences rather than a strong theory-based, which is much more realistic when in school	Had one email from mentor – didn't hear much throughout the 8 weeks	Positive attitude Strong communication Monitor progress
BA78	Feedback on how your lessons went Gives you targets Helps to check	What my strengths/ weaknesses are How to improve	Mentor not having enough time for weekly meeting/check planning etc	Approached mentor and asked for help	How little time the mentor had for me as a student teacher let alone the other students in the same	Due to 3 student teachers being in 1 class we were left to teach while teacher/mentor attended CPD and	Sent planning via email	Advice for mentors/give them support	Check planning Give feedback Give targets	By filling out weekly reviews of progress

	over planning				school/class	therefore did not receive much support				
BA79	Allowing time to observe their teaching strategies and planning me into their lessons Looking at their planning for guidance and supporting me when planning my own and providing feedback Supporting me at	How to differentiate my lessons better to suit all abilities Applying effective behaviour management strategies into lessons and encouraged to devise my own Different ways to incorporate practical elements	Trying to allocate time every Friday for weekly reviews of progress due to mentor being involved in so many meetings	Made time during lunch to ensure this was completed	During some of my observed lessons my mentor who would be observing me was called out into a meeting so could not be assessed	This became a regular thing and at times it became very disheartening after all the time and effort I had put into my planning	Communicate more with training co-ordinator to see if another member of staff could carry out my lesson observation	N/A	We had to arrange alternative days for my lesson observation to ensure I had all observation I needed	I was well-prepared and well organised for all meetings with my mentor I asked lots of questions whenever I was unsure about something

	any possible opportunity for full class teaching	into lessons								
BA80	Scrutinises planning Lesson observations Provides prior knowledge on the class	Different strategies in the classroom	Not enough time for students Unaware it is part of their role to mentor us in school	Approached mentor and asked for time Showed mentor placement handbook	How little support we got, we were often 'left to our own devices' without any guidance	Teachers didn't give us much support or guidance	Delivered lessons to the best of my ability	Prepared us more in lesson planning Advised the mentors to support us more and allocate more time to our mentors	Let me teach lessons freely Allowed me to look at medium term plans	By being positive and proactive Ensured there was good communication
BA81	Weekly meetings to review Introduce to other staff members Share knowledge and	Behaviour management strategies Planning Approaching parents The list is endless	A difficult situation between my placement partner and myself, uneven workload	Professional conversation with both mentors to discuss my issues	At first the criticism was hard to take but I became more reflective and aware that it was helping me	See above	Discussed with my mentor Developed a strong relationship with her	Discuss more and role play scenarios of the lesson observation feedback situation to illustrate	Always made time to fill in required documentation/weekly/daily meetings Treat me as a	Outstanding attendance Worked very hard on feedback given Listened

	guidance from their own experience		affecting grades		significantly			positive and negative situations	member of the setting Gave me responsibility, she was amazing!	Attended extra-curricular events Prepared and organised - communicated
BA82	Gives critical feedback to help me improve Supports me by answering my questions about the school and teaching practice Allows me to have some freedom to practice	Use more open questions Some ideas of ways to teach lessons	At the start – getting to know/adapt to her way of managing a classroom so there wouldn't be such a change for the children that may affect their learning	Asked questions Showed my lesson plans to her prior to the lesson I was taking	No	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	Throughout my placement she was there to guide me when I needed help and support. She was the Deputy Head as well so was quite busy but always made time. Took time for	During placement I made sure I listened to the feedback she gave me in order to progress. As she saw me working on these she became more positive to let me take her

	and develop my teaching								weekly meetings	class more.
BA83	Discuss and share teaching and assessment strategies that they implement Provide feedback on lessons, inform on how to improve Provide support in planning lessons (particularly with regard to differentiation/activities)	AfL strategies in starters, main teach, independent work and plenaries (and marking) How to plan a sequence of lessons in maths and English Behaviour management strategies Changing the pace of lessons, being	My reluctance to ask for help – mentor had two PGCE students in the first 4 weeks and I felt that their support was prioritised.	I suppose I tried to figure things out for myself – I had no issues, really. When it came to seeking advice about subject knowledge I would find the subject leader and speak to them quite informally about it.	My mentor seemed unsure as to how to complete my grade descriptor at first and felt more comfortable in doing it at home, as she had very little time to do so at school	See above	I tried to ensure that our weekly meetings left enough time for my mentor to fill out my grade descriptor and weekly evaluative sheet with me but she felt uncomfortable perhaps? Or just wanted to get home earlier?	Perhaps someone could have contacted her to discuss the weekly evaluation /grade descriptor process	Feedback on lesson observations and planning She helped me to plan my first sequence of lessons and explained how to do/alter this depending on AfL	Positive, professional relationship with my mentor. Going the extra mile to do things/jobs /events/experiences/ intervention that would benefit my mentor and the children

		flexible and providing support (scaffolding, modelling)								
BA84	Makes you feel welcome/part of the permanent teaching staff Offers feedback regularly on how to improve as well as positives Provides opportunities to observe/involve oneself in a range of good/outstanding teaching	My experiences with mentors so far have been very positive, I was lucky enough in first year to have a mentor who I believe significantly improved my confidence by allowing me to get involved from the	In comparison to my first year mentor, my second year mentor approached the mentoring role very differently. I still had an overall positive experience however there were occasions where my mentor was difficult to	After a while I realised that this was nothing personal against me but just part of my mentor's character as she was the same with permanent staff members too. I dealt with this by choosing when best to	1. I felt nervous to begin with before meeting my mentor. 2. My mentor had 4 of us to mentor	1. This is because having a mentor for 8 weeks is a big part of your school placement and therefore you want your mentoring experience to be a positive one. 2. I don't feel like I got the same or as personal	I was lucky enough to have another class teacher in the EYFS unit who was an NQT from our course who would make a super mentor! So, therefore, whenever I had issues that I could not bring up with my own	More support from link tutor Better communication with training co-ordinator as mine was more bothered about their staff members than any issues with students.	During my second year placement my mentor was clearly well experienced in giving feedback as she provided me with information and comments that I was able to build upon immediately, ready for the	During both first and second year, I have made sure that I have gone into placement with a positive mind-set but also an open mind meaning that I can adapt to the different environments/settings of my mentor. I

	experiences	outset. From this I have learnt how I would behave if one day I am a mentor for students. As well as the professional/teaching aspects I have learnt the importance of showing a love of what you do.	approach which made some situations uncomfortable.	approach her and approaching the other class teacher instead if this was more appropriate.		experience as I did with my mentor in first year because with there being 4 of us,she was more in demand and difficult to approach.	mentor, I discussed with her.		next lesson.	am still in contact with my mentor from first year due to the positive experience that I had!
BA85	Gives you honest, constructive feedback on your lessons	I observed her teaching reception children so have learnt about the ways in	Getting feedback – she would leave my sheet on the table and I wouldn't	I asked her for verbal feedback myself. My mentor never filled in any of my	My mentor was quite supportive but sometimes I felt like she would say one thing to	This sometime smade me feel like I wasn't doing well and that she possibly	I tried to do exactly what she asked me and tried not to get in the way or be annoying.	I'm not sure they could have. It was more an unforeseen issue that you	Helped me with what to include in my lessons to make them better,	I tried to work alongside her and not give her any irrelevant work that could

	Doesn't put you down if a lesson went badly Sees you as part of the team, not as a 'scivvy'	which these children learn best and how to implement different strategies into lessons. Observing her behaviour managem ent I learnt how I don't want to do this.	know if I could take it or not. She gave me verbal feedback for my first lesson but for none of the others	weekly reviews so I had to get the other reception teacher to do them	my face and another behind my back	saw me as a pain	This is because there had been issues with other students at that time and I was worried she viewed me in the same light.	can't prepare for and I was probably over thinking things and thinking there was an issue when there wasn't	helped me improve my phonics knowledge and also answered any questions I had about certain matters	make her less happy to have me in her classroom
BA86	Welcome – allows you to adapt their classroom and feel like you are part of the team Time – allows time within	Modelling strategies and behaviour managem ent which I can use throughout my practice Correct way to use	No gratitude sometime s for the effort and work you put in. Asked to do a lot which I don't mind but a thank you	Judgment s – I got on with it and it made me want to prove them wrong which is what I did in the end. I struggled	Sometime s the way my mentor approache d me and spoke to me (this was felt by TAs too). He would carry on saying stuff to me	I felt sometime s like he spoke to me like a student [a pupil?]. Despite this I managed to come out with	Honestly I just got on with it and went home feeling very down and stressed	Providing mentors with more training. Understan d that we are willing to do a lot just not everything . More link tutor visits.	Gave me lots of positive and negative feedback. My interventio n mentor was lovely and really supportive	Remembe red that I was there to teach and tried my 100% best. Also tried my best to bond with my mentor.

	their day to talk you through things e.g. planning Wants you to succeed and helps you to get where you want to be	success criteria Not every lesson goes to plan	sometimes isn't hard (small review on feedback) Make a first judgement very fast of you without giving you a chance	to speak to anyone in school about this.	until I cracked into tears	outstanding grade			at a hard time	
BA87	Send you their planning/inform you about upcoming plans with time Inform you of what works well for the children and tell you what to include	How planning is carried out Not to leave planning for lessons until the last minute To not be unorganised – from classroom to	My mentor had just finished her NQT year when I went into her class. She gave me a lack of support and guidance which as a result had a great effect on my	I asked as many questions and feedback as possible as this was not something she would just feedback to me. I emailed my link tutor but	Yes, as mentioned above I had a negative experience which really affected my confidence and as a result had a large negative emotional effect on	See above	I had support from a few of my friends who were also on the same course. I worked as a pair with my peer as this was the main way we could	By training mentors even more. By ensuring all schools are adequate enough to take on trainee teachers.	Not a lot. Towards the end once she realised the effect this had had on my placement she tried to give me some more guidance.	By trying to be as helpful as possible in the classroom. By trying to create a positive relationship.

	in planning Review your planning and lessons and resources and give you guidance on how to improve	planning lessons/marking etc.	performance, learning and confidence!	didn't have much support I spoke to my head teacher who was supposed to be my actual mentor and got some support	me. I found the placement very stressful because of this and it was not the experienced I had wished/hoped for		support each other. I had support from family members who tried to reassure me and give me guidance.			
BA88	Read lesson plan/PowerPoint prior to me teaching Informal feedback throughout	Differing behaviour management strategies	1. Difficulties over approaches to learning/teaching e.g. I wanted the children to spend time responding to feedback	1. I had to follow my mentor's advice when she was observing. When she wasn't I did my 'own thing'. 2. Attitude – with great difficulty. I	Yes – it was clear toward the end that my mentor didn't want me to be there.	Yes – it was clear toward the end that my mentor didn't want me to be there. This was difficult to deal with. This was made clear by comments made.	In simple terms, I just 'got on with it'. I didn't feel comfortable discussing this with the training co-ordinator as I felt matters	I'm not entirely sure – perhaps they could hold sessions prior to placement to make it clear how we can deal with difficult situations. More	Discuss lesson plans prior to me teaching	Remains positive and 'happy' throughout school. This was extremely challenging as I didn't feel this way but I knew this is a key skill of

			but my mentor advised against this 2. Attitude of mentor reflected how helpful they were on that day	just carried on and tried to use my initiative		Furthermore, my emails were often ignored and at times I felt myself questioning what was wrong due to my mentor's ever changing attitude	would only be made worse.	training for mentors.		being a teacher
BA89	Give you support and guidance in your training Constructive criticism in order to improve (when observing) Be there if you have	My most recent mentor gave frequent guidance to help me improve in my training. I learnt different teaching and behaviour strategies	Meeting consistently with mentors has been as issue in the past and also explaining my role to the mentor as they weren't fully aware of my role in the	Allocated one day per week to meet with the mentor and discuss the whole week Went through placement handbook together	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	My mentor was extremely supportive in my last school – ensuring I had all relevant documentation, information on the children and including	Built up a positive relationship from the beginning and ensured I was a valuable part of the team in the classroom

	questions/ queries/co ncerns	from her (most recent mentor)	classroom and why I was there						me in school life	
BA90	Gives feedback Supports you Helps you throughout your placement	That often that support isn't given continuou sly In my last placement she was a lot better and helped me improve	If they are not your class teacher you rarely see them If done well (in last placement) sometime s feedback can be hard to hear	Try and fit around them, see and speak whenever they are free Improve these with guidance (if given)	Not having a mentor there when sometime s you need them	Not having a mentor there when sometime s you need them	Try and speak to them whenever I could.	Ask mentors to be in the setting, mine was only in the setting in the mornings	Feedback Support Encourag ement	Being proactive, not leaving it to them Making sure I have done weekly evaluation s etc.
BA91	Gives positive feedback where necessary , always constructiv e to build	Impossible to write everything down! I was very fortunate to have supportive mentors throughout	As discussed above I have been very lucky in having supportive mentors who want me to	N/A	Luckily not, I feel nervous when meeting new mentors in apprehens ion of their attitudes	N/A	N/A	The programm e could possibly prepare us for mentors who are not as supportive	Given constructiv e comments to help improve, all have realised that I'm only a	I have tried to ensure that I took on board all feedback and put everything into

	confidence Gives guidance and improvement Provides welcoming feelings and helps me to feel part of the school – positive attitude	my time on this course. I have grown in confidence. Seen them model outstanding lessons and learnt where to improve in planning and assessment.	succeed and provide opportunities to expand my experiences within placement		but so far these worries have left almost immediately.			and how to go about dealing with this. Link tutors not always the best route.	student so do not know everything and were forthcoming with helpful tips and support regarding planning, teaching and behaviour management etc.	placement and my relationships with mentors in order to create a positive impression of me.

Appendix 6: School A (SA) Mentor Data

R1 As a little ice breaker, can we just make sure we can see one of these [selection of images of mentors taken from films – see attached] and if you could choose a mentor, or choose to be a mentor, from these people, who would you have?

M7 Mr Miyagi

R1 M7?

M7 Mr Miyagi - he's got patience and they do it alongside each other, rather than just being told what to do they're doing it together and I think there's a lot of practise involved

M1 He's got a lot of skill aswell hasn't he? He knows a lot… so you'd be confident in having him as your mentor

M3 You see I'd pick Dumbledore for the same reason but because he's also not afraid to let you drown a little bit but you can learn, because he let Harry go a little bit before he pulled him back in

M1 Yeah… Mr Miyagi let Karate Kid break his leg [laughter]

M3 Yeah, ok – well then… for the same reasons!

M2 A good mentor lets you take risks but is there on the sideline

M3 & M1 – Mmm, yeah

R1 – Anything else?

M1 – I like Miss Honey but Matilda's more of the mentor than she is I think, Matilda's mentored her, she'd built her confidence

M3 Mmhum

M4 – I like James Bond because once she dies ….. she really is the boss and he knows that but the line they have, he often crosses it but he's respectful in crossing the line

R1 – So, if we move on from that… Why would you choose to mentor students, why do you mentor students?

M2 Because you remember your own good or bad experiences of being mentored

M3 Because you feel like you've got things that you can show them – little tricks that they can use, when you see them struggling away, day after day, you sometimes think well… actually I could help you here a little bit with this

M1 And they're fresh so a lot of their ideas you can take as well, do you know what I mean so… if you've been teaching angles for 6, 7, 8 years and you've done the same thing year after year, they can bring a fresh…

M3 It does work both ways

M1 Yes, it does

M3 Especially when the new curriculum came out, they were coming in with fresh ideas and you thought – this is the way we should do it now

R1 What have you learned from your experiences of being mentors yourselves would you say?

M5 I'd say I've got a lot of patience

M3 Currently

M5 Yeah and learned to just take each day as it comes, step by step, feeding little chunks of information and then hopefully it'll build up to become the full package at the end

M2 There's maybe a risk of getting a student and thinking that you'll get some time off or that it's an easier ride for a few months when they do the work but actually being the mentor is often the opposite, it's a different role but it's not an easier option.

M3 My favourite thing about being a mentor is being at the back of the class and seeing how the class behave rather than at the front because you get a totally different perspective on the class and I think it's much better to see behaviour because otherwise you sort of get focussed on a naughty child and pick on him and that usually means you forget about the other kids or whatever

M1 I like seeing students, or whoever you're mentoring, get relationships with the children you don't have that relationship with, like ****** now – she has relationships with some of the children in my class that I don't have those relationships with, maybe because their personalities are similar or … and it's nice to see how that works out as well

M7 I think it's nice to see their progress, it's just like when you've got children in your class and you're measuring the progress, how they come into school, how the students come into school, and how they leave the placement… and they do make a lot of progress. It's quite a confidence boost for us as well, when they're watching you teach and they say 'oh, I love how you did that'

M1 And then when you [referring to SM] come in and your marks are similar

M5 You think you might be being harsh

M1 Yeah, and they're similar, you know you're on the same page

M4 And having the wide range that we've had in Early Years and you know which strategies to use , with the trainees themselves because you know, for example, one person just didn't listen to any advice so it had to be 'well – it's this way or you're out' type of thing but then you've got other people who are like little sponges, who soak up the ideas without you even saying 'try this', by the next lesson they're trying out what they've seen you doing, making sure you're aware of their learning styles as well and how they take things and what their next steps are, as well as the children's

M7 I always feel that we want them to do their best so I don't want anyone to fail that's coming in, unless their lesson is bad and then I will, but I feel that I want to help them to get better

R1 Moving on from what M4 said there about erm, you know, over time you build up this bank of strategies to help different people. Do you think there's an optimal time in your own career to be a mentor?

M7 I think you've got to be teaching a while

M3 Not early on

M7 No

M3 But then after that I don't see that … I think that even if you've been teaching a long time…

M2 I think… I was also going to throw in a devil's advocate… when you're fresh to teaching and you've just been through the experience you're aware… you have to be a strong teacher… you can't be just be scraped through the experience… but you know with years of qualifying you remember what it was like but you've learned enough to…

R1 Actually, that goes back to something somebody said before about you know, giving you confidence, as a recently qualified teacher, potentially ,it make you realise how much you know when you're mentoring

M4 I think that's true but 'devil's advocate back at you' I think you need a certain length of time in the profession to have developed coaching and mentoring strategies … wonderful teaching but the whole pastoral care and things like that, things like the NPQICL and experience of coaching and mentoring strategies that can be taken through the rest of their career

M1 And I had a student after my NQT year

M7 But you're different [laughter]

M1 But that was a little bit tricky because she was older and I find sometimes the age gap between and especially a male, an older male, you find it harder when you have a young female

M2 We have had that before

M1 Yeah, a few times

M2 Yeah, I think a newly qualified, well not a new newly qualified but a young, relatively experienced teacher can be a mentor depending on their experience and who *they* are - also depending on the student, so we've had students who've basically said 'what right do they have to teach me' when they've just passed themselves

M1 Those exact words

M2 Practically, yes

M7 I think it's important to be able to give feedback

M1 Definitely

M7 We're all kind of management and so we know how to do that and we've been doing it for staff for years, I think that just makes it easier

M1 And it is going back to that thing of who you had as a mentor yourself because I had these two [referring to colleagues at the table] so it's like you learn from them and then it was easy, well not easy, but it was nice to see what… and then I could take it on and there are some teachers currently who had awful mentors and I don't understand that… you're all training to do the same job?

M7 It's like a power thing sometimes [hoover starts!]

M1 I know [& general agreement from around the table]

M7 Some mentors er want to be *nasty* to you

R1 Well that's kind of what ***** was saying about building on your own experience… [M6 joined the group] M6 – if I can just pass you this consent form to explicitly say that you're happy to be recorded in our mentoring conversation

M4 I think as well for my experience of when I was going through university I had a mentor who was at the very end of her career and like, you know, within 2 years of retirement and because she had seen the cycle of the literacy strategy, the numeracy strategy, no curriculum at all, and the cycles of time they sometimes put you off by saying what do you want to go into teaching for?' And like if you get it too late you have to be careful not to put them off because it's hard enough to recruit in the first place.

M2 Yeah, I had a mentor who was leaving at the end of that year and it was really obvious that they just didn't want to be there, they weren't dealing with any of the issues in the school, it wasn't their problem anymore, that made it really hard, really hard

M7 And then it's a really bad experience for students, that you're just setting them off on their career in the wrong frame of mind

M2 Yeah, if it had been my first year placement I wouldn't have done it, because it was my final one and I'd had 3 good ones I knew that was not was teaching was but if you're doing a PGCE and you get that one teacher then that's it isn't it?

R1 So if you think on some programmes, maybe like a School Direct programme where you really have one main placement, you do go on a short placement elsewhere, but that is your mentor so… if you can pick out what you think is *the* most important thing that a mentor does?

M3 Support

R1 So – yeah, let's each have a word so…. Support?

? Guidance [not sure who said this]

R1 – by the time we get round it'll be interesting! So… support, guidance… M4? It can be the same word?

? Shall we just all say support? Support, support, support [not sure who said this first - general agreement around the table]

M7 can I say Model

M1 Inspire

M7 Yes

M3 That's a good word

? Challenge [not sure who said this]

M2 Rescue

M1 Someone who's going to instil passion as well because it's a job where you need that passion isn't it?

M5 I also think it's important to be approachable to the students as well

M4 Motivate them

M3 Mmhum

M1 Be tough at times, you've got to be tough

R1 Yes, you need that at times don't you? …it's hard not to join in… really hard not to join in!

M4 Trust… you're just giving them your class really and you're trusting that the er university have sent you someone reliable, sensible, worthy of your class and then you're handing them over aren't you, with the support in place?

M1 And the other way – they've got to trust you as well because it is just sometimes 9 months that they're training for isn't it? You've got to give them everything

R1 Yes, in that relatively short time

M1 Yeah

R1 So, when your mentee… if you kind of think of the first day when your mentee arrives in your classroom, what are the things that you are looking for, that you are *hoping for* in your mentee?

M6 initiative [agreement around the table]

M3 That's exactly what I was going to say

M1 That's been lacking recently

M7 Yeah, yeah

M4 I haven't had initiative in my students in the past few years but I've had initiative this time

M2 Genuine interest and care in the children, someone who seems to really want to be there and to get to know the kids and isn't doing it to 'pass the course'

M3 Yep, it's more like a job – they can just be here for 6 weeks, get in amongst it straightaway

M5 yes, a vocation

M3 You can tell straightaway, pretty much

R1 Ok, and if you think of some of the challenges that you've faced as a mentor, in the mentoring process, could you share any of those challenges?

M1 Come on M6!

R1 You don't have to name the students but you can share the challenges

M3 We've talked before about certain students who thought they were above, like the mentors, so we had one chap, from ***** University, who, every time somebody gave him some advice to try and move him on, to be fair – especially if it was woman, he just didn't listen to anything so then we ended up having arguments with the university and it didn't turn out very nicely in the end because, because of his attitude

M7 Yep

M2 And he… he didn't get, he didn't get out kids? He was, you know, bringing in really expensive kinds of things and saying 'you know, if you work really hard you can have these things as well' it was, it was er, not trying to belittle our kids, but they weren't things they'd aspire to, does that sound wrong?

M1 No, no

M3 He was talking about things like that were out of their scope

M1 yeah, like his drum kit was like thousands of pounds

M2 Yes, the drum kit he brought in it was just you know, like – our kids didn't need a thousand pound drum kit you know? and he wasn't on their level, he didn't…

M3 Geography lesson

M2 It wasn't a geography lesson, it was when we went on a residential

M1 Oh yeah

M2 he was taking them up the hill and stopping to look at all these rocks and the kids just wanted to go for a walk

M7 I've had a trainee who was only interested in themselves so I just felt that they'd come in and they were bothered about their grades and about how the lesson went but you need to be bothered about the kids, that needs to be number one and I know it's hard because it is about them and it is their career but when they come in they need to want to make a difference to the children because that's why you're in the job long term so..

M4 That would happen if they were doing that for the children because what they'd be doing for the children would be right.

M7 Yeah

M3 It's like a self-fulfilling prophecy

M1 I've had someone whose confidence and self-esteem hasn't been there, subject knowledge and everything like that, like the layout of the lesson has been there and the progression that they've wanted to make for the children but that self esteem and confidence has been so low that it's been hard to make the other things positive, even though it's all there

R1 Yeah, ok, so if you had those, sorry M6 – were you wanting to say something?

M6 Yeah, I had a challenge with a student who wasn't a 100% sure [about going into teaching] then whatever advice you gave you were kind of ….

M2 Yep, we've had students who don't seem to understand the job you know – it must be an easy ride and then you know – you get all these holidays, it's amazing and then they haven't quite understood when 9 is and when 3 is because they're not when everyone else thinks they are!

M1 And the other things that come outside of the lessons, teaching isn't just…

M4 I had a student basically who thought she could buy it and she had no passion for the children or…

R1 That's what M7 was saying about really wanting to make a difference and that's want you're in the job for so… in terms of *dealing* with those challenges, M3 - in your challenge you mentioned getting in touch with the university… I'm guessing that was in order to deal with it?

M3 Yes

R1 tell us a little bit about that

M3 Well, we contacted the university and spoke to his tutors and they didn't understand that what we were saying was right - we tried moving him into different classrooms, putting him into a different key stage, in the end he just came with me, not because of the fault of any of the other teachers but because I knew what the university was saying and they weren't going to fail him under any circumstances so we just had to get him through, he did actually get on better with males than he did females which was strange thing so he wouldn't speak back to me , he would say 'yeah, yeah – that's a great thing to do' whereas I don't think he would have ever said to the teachers in the other classrooms

M2 He wasn't particularly rude to me but he er didn't really listen to any advice

M1 Do you know if he got a job?

M3 Yes, he did, he's still teaching

M1 Wowsa

M4 I mean in the past we (M4 & SM) we've had conversations where we've had to arrange extra visits, put in a support plan during the placement

M1 Yes and people talk to me and then I pass it on to you [SM] and sometimes someone'll know to go straight to you [SM] but then sometimes I could step in and we could work together

M5 It has been helpful on this placement to just contact you straightaway and then it can nip things in the bud a bit quicker and get support plans and different things

M4 Also – just in case it's like a mismatch of teacher and mentee make sure that the year group partner has done a crossover observation as well just to make sure

M7 I think it's good that we've known you as long as we have

M3 Yes, the relationship with the university is important isn't it for the student and for the mentors

R1 M6 is there anything in particular that you did to deal with your particular challenge?

M6 Invested an awful of of time

M1 You did, you did

M6 Erm

M2 You gave her a lot of advice and were sending her allsorts of things

M6 basically it was time … alot of extra time

M2 he's good

M1 that's the thing as well - she was emailing you and messaging you well out of school hours

M6 Mmm, yep, yeah

M1 The sort of person where you don't get back and when it's a person when you don't back that person would have left a long time before they did

M6 Yeah, yeah

R1 Yep, they would wouldn't they? Are there any of those aspects then of the mentoring process which have unsettled you?

M4 When they don't act on advice, when you know that in something like literacy or numeracy that this set of children would have got this if they've done the lesson like you'd planned it and they've written it down on their plan, like you said M6, but they still go ahead and do what they wanted to do and then you observe them and they haven't taken one bit on board that that you've asked them to do and they end up wondering why they haven't got 1s and 2s and you have to go back through the same thing that you've started with

M3 But then usually comes to a head because the university's on side whereas the other case we had we didn't get support from the university so that was a little bit unsettling and thinking right this is us on our own here and we can't get rid of him so we're just going to have to sort of like coach him and channel him through it

M2 So yes – when he was in my class it brought out a side of mentoring that I didn't enjoy so I had to be really firm, really blunt and it wasn't fun erm, it was really difficult to try and deal with him the way he was and then because once they said they wouldn't fail him M3 just took over

M1 I think sometimes when it gets like emotional as well and when they bring in personal things from home because we all know as teachers and friends that things are happening at home and you can deal with it but as soon as you come in to work, or in the classroom, that personal side's got to go and I think when you're with a student and you're giving them bad feedback or etc and then they bring in something personal you're like er oh no or they start crying and you're like oh crap

M4 I found it difficult when we had a student, when we had a visit from the ex-prime minister, decided to tell the ex-prime minister that she had been 'put outside in the Early Years because she was a student so that she'd be out of the way when the ex prime minister came' and that it 'was because she was a lesbian', so things like that I found really difficult so when she said things like 'oh it's because I'm a lesbian' when she'd had a bad lesson I mean what do you say to that? No, if you were heterosexual I wouldn't like it either!

R1 So if we're thinking of that as being unsettling then did you feel that you weren't able to be honest with her in case she said that?

M1 Yes and because we work in pairs then there's always someone to support you or to back you up

M4 Yes, after that I didn't do a single observation or feedback on my own and then you [SM] came in and did joint observations as well

M1 Yes, and when we had to speak to the last one when you [SM] came in and at least 2 or 3 of us were there

M7 Because I think words could have been twisted

M4 Yes, exactly, twisted words – that's what you worry about

M6 Yes, this person would change things that I'd said, also the boundaries of expectations when you've had the afternoon to talk about things [referring back to what M1 had said about contact being made well out of school hours]

M1 I'd hate ringing anyway – I'd hate to speak with a stranger

R1 Ok, so if we just… we've probably covered those three aspects in that one in term so thinking about how we've dealt with things and what was unsettling what do you feel providers do currently that does help to prepare you for the mentoring process?

M1 We had a meeting for this one didn't we?

M5 yes, mentor training

M2 A meeting where they laid out all the expectations and, you know, a guide with the dates of what needs to be done, you know, what we need to be doing

M4 I used to like the cluster meetings where everyone got together who were going to have students

M5 and we did observations

M4 yes, and we got the handbook rather than just getting it electronically becuase I'm still a bit of a paper person, I'll like to mark it up on there and stuff. And to know we were going to go there and moderate, I mean we're lucky because we have so many students we moderate in house quite regularly anyway but in the past when one of us had them one at a time it was quite limiting in that way

R1 and so once the placement has started what is it that providers do that you feel is helpful while you're in the process of it?

M3 Well, you're in school quite regularly - it's good to know that you're just on the end of the phone or just chat a problem through and it gets sorted out quicker

R1 Is there anything else that you can think of that providers could do beforehand or during the process which would help you more?

M1 I think an example of what observing a lesson looks like because I know when we get observed in our jobs it's different because we're at different stages in our career maybe what you would write for a lesson

M4 for a Y1, Y2 and Y3…?

M1 Kind of yeah and where they are because really they're right at the very beginning and you can't really compare that to what we do

M3 Do you mean like a bank of lesson plans or something? So you can see how they'd plan?

M1 No, no observation sheets - yeah like a bank of… because sometimes you feel like you're repeating yourself

M4 Well you do because you just look at the standards don't you?

M1 true, ah so

R1 So, more about the actual writing of the observations?

M1 or maybe just one at the beginning, like a good one and a bad one and how you word the bad one

R1 Ok – I was thinking you meant an example of a good observation and then one which wasn't up to standard do you know what I mean?

M3/M1 No no

M7 I think it would be quite nice to know what they've been learning about at university

M1 Like their timetable

M7 Yes, like what lectures they've had, have they had safeguarding, things on assessment just be nice to have a little overview of what they've been told

M1 Because we could fill the gaps

M5 Yes, on the phonics side of things – what have they been told at university relating to phonics and the teaching of maths would be helpful because the emails I receive from students later on asking me to sign things regarding the phonics and early maths

M4 I think when you definitely know who's going to come on placement I think a copy of their last placement report before they get here so we've got time to think before their first meeting with us

M1 We've had a couple who've like modified their targets

R1 From their previous placement to this one?

M1 Yeah

R1 At times we would say that they can do that because sometimes they have on their report something, and I find this sometimes with something like behaviour management, if they've come from somewhere with a very particular behaviour management style and that teacher might think their behaviour management skills aren't up to par because for example, they don't have their children working in silence, we say to them when you get to your next school this target might not be as appropriate because they're quite happy for their children to talk whilst they work?

M1 Yeah

R1 Anything else you can think of during placement which would be helpful?

M4 one thing I'm not as good at with them is their file, policies and all the information that they need - I know they come with their contents list but trying to get it out of them is like drawing teeth so just to have that so we know what's expected, if they're a good teacher they can't be a good teacher without a good file

R1 Now I guess that was something that when we used to have the parity meetings you'd go with your students' files and you'd be able to cross-moderate

M4 parity meetings were good

R1 Ultimately we moved on from those because attendance was poor

M7 I think sometimes they were quite time consuming after you'd been in school all day and then going to a meeting at 4 o clock , if we could do it in a group like this…

M1 Yeah, they were like half 4 to half 6 weren't they

M4 We could it in house or across Blyth

M2 I was thinking about meeting the students – they brought all the students in and the students came across and introduced themselves before they came in

M1 There are a lot more students on a PGCE though than a SCITT?

R1 Yeah, we've got 90 this year

M2 That wold take a while to get through [laughter]

R1 Ok, anything else you would just like to think about or mention before we finish about experiences that you've had ?

M4 Something I've found difficult, which I've just remembered, is when we had a paired placement and one was good and one wasn't

M1 yeah

M4 I found that really difficult because one person was taking everything on board and doing everything that should have been shared as it was supposed to be and this person didn't even take advantage of this person but just kept 'thinking' so it wasn't just the mentor they weren't listening to advice from but it was their own paired partner and they didn't like it, they felt really uncomfortable with it

M1 I think though 'sharing is caring' and there's no point in being a teacher to reinvent the wheel

M7 Yeah, it's not a competition

M1 I do find a paired placement a difficult one though

M3 I used to like them because they bounced off each other

M7 If they're paired with another student they do want to be better than the other

M2 A bit of healthy competition is good

M1 But I wouldn't come in and do worksheets and lesson objectives and not do M7 any? It's just little things like that… yes – you could make your lessons different rather than doing the same

M2 But if you've got one who's weaker than the other you do find one ends up doing everything and the other one…

M1 And then you'd never give them a job would you?

R1 So how did you deal with that?

M6 Well, the weaker one gets the support and sometimes the other one gets left and you think you haven't supported them as well as you could have done

M2 We have split a couple of final placements, across a year so that they've been getting the same teaching experience

M6 I wonder whether when they're in a pair if they're really getting that experience of *being a teacher?*

M7 I think it's difficult to get the time for them to observe us , on a paired placement they spend a alot of time observing each other which is sometimes not good practice

M1 I think in a paired placement it might be good to do a week on a week off with literacy and numeracy so one would do literacy one week and the other would do numeracy and then swap the week after. Because they all try and get in as much as possible but it'd be better to focus on that progression in a subject?

M2 Yeah, we did that couple of years ago in a paired placement

M1 yeah, and then split the foundation subjects and then they can leave the classroom, they don't have to watch the other one

R1 Then they can use that time for instance to go and observe some phonics or get into EY

M7 We talk about them giving feedback but at first they don't have the skill to give that feedback

M1 and they go the negative straightaway don't they?

R1 Anything else you can think of… M1?

M1 They've been really good this time at filling out the Weekly Reviews because I hate it when they come and they don't know what to say.

R1 M2, anything else you can think of?

M2 No, I don't think so

R1 M3?

M3 Just make sure you don't make those first impressions, let them have a week to settle in, sometimes they can be really nervous and come out with things, says things

M2 or they can be really arrogant and cocky and they end up not being

M3 or the other way, you can think ''oh this one's a bit older, they might be stuck in their ways' but they end up being the best

M4?

M4 Nope, all talked out!

R1 M5?

M5 I just think this past couple of years has been better because of the relationship we've built up with the university is different and made a difference to everyone's placement really and it's helped us as teachers a lot, it's been really beneficial

R1 M6?

M6 No

R1 M7?

M7 No

R1 Marvellous, mentoring discussion ended! Thanks everyone. ****, can you press…

Appendix 7: Coded School A (SA) Mentor Data

R1 As a little ice breaker, can we just make sure we can see one of these [selection of images of mentors taken from films – see attached] and if you could choose a mentor, or choose to be a mentor, from these people, who would you have?

M7 My Miyagi

R1 M7?

M7 Mr Miyagi - he's got patience and they do it alongside each other, rather than just being told what to do they're doing it together and I think there's a lot of practise involved

M1 He's got a lot of skill aswell hasn't he? He knows a lot… so you'd be confident in having him as your mentor

M3 You see I'd pick Dumbledore for the same reason but because he's also not afraid to let you drown a little bit but you can learn, because he let Harry go a little bit before he pulled him back in

M1 Yeah… Mr Miyagi let Karate Kid break his leg [laughter]

M3 Yeah, ok – well then… for the same reasons!

M2 A good mentor lets you take risks but is there on the sideline

JI & M1 – Mmm, yeah

R1 – Anything else?

M1 – I like Miss Honey but Matilda's more of the mentor than she is I think, Matilda's mentored her, she'd built her confidence

JI Mmhum

M4 – I like James Bond because once she dies ….. she really is the boss and he knows that but the line they have, he often crosses it but he's respectful in crossing the line

R1 – So, if we move on from that… Why would you choose to mentor students, why do you mentor students?

M2 Because you remember your own good or bad experiences of being mentored

M3 Because you feel like you've got things that you can show them – little tricks that they can use, when you see them struggling away, day after day, you sometimes think well… actually I could help you here a little bit with this

M1 And they're fresh so a lot of their ideas you can take as well, do you know what I mean so… if you've been teaching angles for 6, 7, 8 years and you've done the same thing year after year, they can bring a fresh…

M3 It does work both ways

M1 Yes, it does

M3 Especially when the new curriculum came out, they were coming in with fresh ideas and you thought – this is the way we should do it now

R1 What have you learned from your experiences of being mentors yourselves would you say?

M5 I'd say I've got a lot of patience

M3 Currently

M5 Yeah and learned to just take each day as it comes, step by step, feeding little chunks of information and then hopefully it'll build up to become the full package at the end

M2 There's maybe a risk of getting a student and thinking that you'll get some time off or that it's an easier ride for a few months when they do the work but actually being the mentor is often the opposite, it's a different role but it's not an easier option.

M3 My favourite thing about being a mentor is being at the back of the class and seeing how the class behave rather than at the front because you get a totally different perspective on the class and I think it's much better to see behaviour because otherwise you sort of get focussed on a naughty child and pick on him and that usually means you forget about the other kids or whatever

M1 I like seeing students, or whoever you're mentoring, get relationships with the children you don't have that relationship with, like ***** now – she has relationships with some of the children in my class that I don't have those relationships with, maybe because their personalities are similar or … and it's nice to see how that works out as well

M7 I think it's nice to see their progress, it's just like when you've got children in your class and you're measuring the progress, how they come into school, how the students come into school, and how they leave the placement… and they do make a lot of progress. It's quite a confidence boost for us as well, when they're watching you teach and they say 'oh, I love how you did that'

M1 And then when ****** come in and your marks are similar

M5 You think you might be being harsh

M1 Yeah, and they're similar, you know you're on the same page

M4 And having the wide range that we've had in Early Years and you know which strategies to use , with the trainees themselves because you know, for example, one person just didn't listen to any advice so it had to be 'well – it's this way or you're out' type of thing but then you've got other people who are like little sponges, who soak up the ideas without you even saying 'try this', by the next lesson they're trying out what they've seen you doing, making sure you're aware of their learning styles as well and how they take things and what their next steps are, as well as the children's

M7 I always feel that we want them to do their best so I don't want anyone to fail that's coming in, unless their lesson is bad and then I will, but I feel that I want to help them to get better

R1 Moving on from what M4 said there about erm, you know, over time you build up this bank of strategies to help different people. Do you think there's an optimal time in your own career to be a mentor?

M7 I think you've got to be teaching a while

M3 Not early on

M7 No

M3 But then after that I don't see that … I think that even if you've been teaching a long time…

M2 I think… I was also going to throw in a devil's advocate… when you're fresh to teaching and you've just been through the experience you're aware… you have to be a strong teacher… you can't be just be scraped through the experience… but you know with years of qualifying you remember what it was like but you've learned enough to…

R1 Actually, that goes back to something somebody said before about you know, giving you confidence, as a recently qualified teacher, potentially ,it make you realise how much you know when you're mentoring

M4 I think that's true but 'devil's advocate back at you' I think you need a certain length of time in the profession to have developed coaching and mentoring strategies … wonderful teaching but the whole pastoral care and things like that, things like the NPQICL and experience of coaching and mentoring strategies that can be taken through the rest of their career

M1 And I had a student after my NQT year

M7 But you're different [laughter]

M1 But that was a little bit tricky because she was older and I find sometimes the age gap between and especially a male, an older male, you find it harder when you have a young female

M2 We have had that before

M1 Yeah, a few times

M2 Yeah, I think a newly qualified, well not a new newly qualified but a young, relatively experienced teacher can be a mentor depending on their experience and who *they* are - also depending on the student, so we've had students who've basically said 'what right do they have to teach me' when they've just passed themselves

M1 Those exact words

M2 Practically, yes

M7 I think it's important to be able to give feedback

M1 Definitely

M7 We're all kind of management and so we know how to do that and we've been doing it for staff for years, I think that just makes it easier

M1 And it is going back to that thing of who you had as a mentor yourself because I had these two [referring to colleagues at the table] so it's like you learn from them and then it was easy, well not easy, but it was nice to see what… and then I could take it on and there are some teachers currently who had awful mentors and I don't understand that… you're all training to do the same job?

M7 It's like a power thing sometimes [hoover starts!]

M1 I know [& general agreement from around the table]

M7 Some mentors er want to be *nasty* to you

R1 Well that's kind of what M2 was saying about building on your own experience… [M6 Jones joined the group] M6 – if I can just pass you this consent form to explicitly say that you're happy to be recorded in our mentoring conversation

M4 I think as well for my experience of when I was going through university I had a mentor who was at the very end of her career and like, you know, within 2 years of retirement and because she had seen the cycle of the literacy strategy, the numeracy strategy, no curriculum at all, and the cycles of time they sometimes put you off by saying what do you want to go into teaching for?' And like if you get it too late you have to be careful not to put them off because it's hard enough to recruit in the first place.

M2 Yeah, I had a mentor who was leaving at the end of that year and it was really obvious that they just didn't want to be there, they weren't dealing with any of the issues in the school, it wasn't their problem anymore, that made it really hard, really hard

M7 And then it's a really bad experience for students, that you're just setting them off on their career in the wrong frame of mind

M2 Yeah, if it had been my first year placement I wouldn't have done it, because it was my final one and I'd had 3 good ones I knew that was not was teaching was but if you're doing a PGCE and you get that one teacher then that's it isn't it?

R1 So if you think on some programmes, maybe like a School Direct programme where you really have one main placement, you do go on a short placement elsewhere, but that is your mentor so… if you can pick out what you think is *the* most important thing that a mentor does?

M3 Support

R1 So – yeah, let's each have a word so…. Support?

? Guidance [not sure who said this]

R1 – by the time we get round it'll be interesting! So… support, guidance… M4? It can be the same word?

? Shall we just all say support? Support, support, support [not sure who said this first - general agreement around the table]

M7 can I say Model

M1 Inspire

M7 Yes

M3 That's a good word

? Challenge [not sure who said this]

M2 Rescue

M1 Someone who's going to instil passion as well because it's a job where you need that passion isn't it?

M5 I also think it's important to be approachable to the students as well

M4 Motivate them

M3 Mmhum

M1 Be tough at times, you've got to be tough

R1 Yes, you need that at times don't you? …it's hard not to join in… really hard not to join in!

M4 Trust… you're just giving them your class really and you're trusting that the er university have sent you someone reliable, sensible, worthy of your class and then you're handing them over aren't you, with the support in place?

M1 And the other way – they've got to trust you as well because it is just sometimes 9 months that they're training for isn't it? You've got to give them everything

Sm Yes, in that relatively short time

M1 Yeah

R1 So, when your mentee… if you kind of think of the first day when your mentee arrives in your classroom, what are the things that you are looking for, that you are *hoping for* in your mentee?

M6 initiative [agreement around the table]

M3 That's exactly what I was going to say

M1 That's been lacking recently

M7 Yeah, yeah

M4 I haven't had initiative in my students in the past few years but I've had initiative this time

M2 Genuine interest and care in the children, someone who seems to really want to be there and to get to know the kids and isn't doing it to 'pass the course'

M3 Yep, it's more like a job – they can just be here for 6 weeks, get in amongst it straightaway

M5 yes, a vocation

M3 You can tell straightaway, pretty much

R1 Ok, and if you think of some of the challenges that you've faced as a mentor, in the mentoring process, could you share any of those challenges?

M1 Come on M6!

R1 You don't have to name the students but you can share the challenges

M3 We've talked before about certain students who thought they were above, like the mentors, so we had one chap, from ***** University, who, every time somebody gave him some advice to try and move him on, to be fair – especially if it was woman, he just didn't listen to anything so then we ended up having arguments with the university and it didn't turn out very nicely in the end because, because of his attitude

M7 Yep

M2 And he… he didn't get, he didn't get out kids? He was, you know, bringing in really expensive kinds of things and saying 'you know, if you work really hard you can have these things as well' it was, it was er, not trying to belittle our kids, but they weren't things they'd aspire to, does that sound wrong?

M1 No, no

M3 He was talking about things like that were out of their scope

M1 yeah, like his drum kit was like thousands of pounds

M2 Yes, the drum kit he brought in it was just you know, like – our kids didn't need a thousand pound drum kit you know? and he wasn't on their level, he didn't…

M3 Geography lesson

M2 It wasn't a geography lesson, it was when we went on a residential

M1 Oh yeah

M2 he was taking them up the hill and stopping to look at all these rocks and the kids just wanted to go for a walk

M7 I've had a trainee who was only interested in themselves so I just felt that they'd come in and they were bothered about their grades and about how the lesson went but you need to be bothered about the kids, that needs to be number one and I know it's hard because it is about them and it is their career but when they come in they need to want to make a difference to the children because that's why you're in the job long term so..

M4 That would happen if they were doing that for the children because what they'd be doing for the children would be right.

M7 Yeah

M3 It's like a self-fulfilling prophecy

M1 I've had someone whose confidence and self-esteem hasn't been there, subject knowledge and everything like that, like the layout of the lesson has been there and the progression that they've wanted to make for the children but that self esteem and confidence has been so low that it's been hard to make the other things positive, even though it's all there

R1 Yeah, ok, so if you had those, sorry M6 – were you wanting to say something?

M6 Yeah, I had a challenge with a student who wasn't a 100% sure [about going into teaching] then whatever advice you gave you were kind of ….

M2 Yep, we've had students who don't seem to understand the job you know – it must be an easy ride and then you know – you get all these holidays, it's amazing and then they haven't quite understood when 9 is and when 3 is because they're not when everyone else thinks they are!

M1 And the other things that come outside of the lessons, teaching isn't just…

M4 I had a student basically who thought she could buy it and she had no passion for the children or…

R1 That's what M7 was saying about really wanting to make a difference and that's want you're in the job for so… in terms of *dealing* with those challenges, M3 - in your challenge you mentioned getting in touch with the university… I'm guessing that was in order to deal with it?

M3 Yes

R1 tell us a little bit about that

M3 Well, we contacted the university and spoke to his tutors and they didn't understand that what we were saying was right - we tried moving him into different classrooms, putting him into a different key stage, in the end he just came with me, not because of the fault of any of the other teachers but because I knew what the university was saying and they weren't going to fail him under any circumstances so we just had to get him through, he did actually get on better with males than he did females which was strange thing so he wouldn't speak back to me , he would say 'yeah, yeah – that's a great thing to do' whereas I don't think he would have ever said to the teachers in the other classrooms

M2 He wasn't particularly rude to me but he er didn't really listen to any advice

M1 Do you know if he got a job?

M3 Yes, he did, he's still teaching

M1 Wowsa

M4 I mean in the past we (M4 & R1) we've had conversations where we've had to arrange extra visits, put in a support plan during the placement

M1 Yes and people talk to me and then I pass it on to you [R1] and sometimes someone'll know to go straight to you [R1] but then sometimes I could step in and we could work together

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M1 The sort of person where you don't get back and when it's a person when you don't back that person would have left a long time before they did

M6 Yeah, yeah

R1 Yep, they would wouldn't they? Are there any of those aspects then of the mentoring process which have unsettled you?

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M3 But then usually comes to a head because the university's on side whereas the other case we had we didn't get support from the university so that a little bit unsettling and thinking right this is us on our own here and we can't get rid of him so we're just going to have to sort of like coach him and channel him through it

M2 So yes – when he was in my class it brought out a side of mentoring that I didn't enjoy so I had to be really firm, really blunt and it wasn't fun erm, it was really difficult to try and deal with him the way he was and then because once they said they wouldn't fail him M3 just took over

M1 I think sometimes when it gets like emotional as well and when they bring in personal things from home because we all know as teachers and friends that things are happening at home and you can deal with it but as soon as you come in to work, or in the classroom, that personal side's got to go and I think when you're with a student and you're giving them bad feedback or etc and then they bring in something personal you're like er oh no or they start crying and you're like oh crap

M1 I found it difficult when we had a student, when we had a visit from the ex-prime minister, decided to tell the ex-prime minister that she had been 'put outside in the Early Years because she was a student so that she'd be out of the way when the ex prime minister came' and that it 'was because she was a lesbian', so things like that I found really difficult so when she said things like 'oh it's because I'm a lesbian' when she'd had a bad lesson I mean what do you say to that? No, if you were heterosexual I wouldn't like it either!

R1 So if we're thinking of that as being unsettling then did you feel that you weren't able to be honest with her in case she said that?

M1 Yes and because we work in pairs then there's always someone to support you or to back you up

M4 Yes, after that I didn't do a single observation or feedback on my own and then you [R1] came in and did joint observations as well

M1 Yes, and when we had to speak to the last one when ***** came in and at least 2 or 3 of us were there

M7 Because I think words could have been twisted

M4 Yes, exactly, twisted words – that's what you worry about

M6 Yes, this person would change things that I'd said, also the boundaries of expectations when you've had the afternoon to talk about things [referring back to what M1 had said about contact being made well out of school hours]

M1 I'd hate ringing anyway – I'd hate to speak with a stranger

R1 Ok, so if we just… we've probably covered those three aspects in that one in term so thinking about how we've dealt with things and what was unsettling what do you feel providers do currently that does help to prepare you for the mentoring process?

M1 We had a meeting for this one didn't we?

M5 yes, mentor training

M2 A meeting where they laid out all the expectations and, you know, a guide with the dates of what needs to be done, you know, what we need to be doing

M4 I used to like the cluster meetings where everyone got together who were going to have students

M5 and we did observations

M4 yes, and we got the handbook rather than just getting it electronically becuase I'm still a bit of a paper person, I'll like to mark it up on there and stuff. And to know we were going to go there and moderate, I mean we're lucky because we have so many students we moderate in house quite regularly anyway but in the past when one of us had them one at a time it was quite limiting in that way

R1 and so once the placement has started what is it that providers do that you feel is helpful while you're in the process of it?

M3 Well, you're in school quite regularly - it's good to know that you're just on the end of the phone or just chat a problem through and it gets sorted out quicker

R1 Is there anything else that you can think of that providers could do beforehand or during the process which would help you more?

M1 I think an example of what observing a lesson looks like because I know when we get observed in our jobs it's different because we're at different stages in our career maybe what you would write for a lesson

M4 for a Y1, Y2 and Y3…?

M1 Kind of yeah and where they are because really they're right at the very beginning and you can't really compare that to what we do

M3 Do you mean like a bank of lesson plans or something? So you can see how they'd plan?

M1 No, no observation sheets - yeah like a bank of… because sometimes you feel like you're repeating yourself

M4 Well you do because you just look at the standards don't you?

M1 true, ah so

R1 So, more about the actual writing of the observations?

M1 or maybe just one at the beginning, like a good one and a bad one and how you word the bad one

R1 Ok – I was thinking you meant an example of a good observation and then one which wasn't up to standard do you know what I mean?

M3/M1 No no

M7 I think it would be quite nice to know what they've been learning about at university

M1 Like their timetable

M7 Yes, like what lectures they've had, have they had safeguarding, things on assessment just be nice to have a little overview of what they've been told

M1 Because we could fill the gaps

M5 Yes, on the phonics side of things – what have they been told at university relating to phonics and the teaching of maths would be helpful because the emails I receive from students later on asking me to sign things regarding the phonics and early maths

M4 I think when you definitely know who's going to come on placement I think a copy of their last placement report before they get here so we've got time to think before their first meeting with us

M1 We've had a couple who've like modified their targets

Sm From their previous placement to this one?

M1 Yeah

R1 At times we would say that they can do that because sometimes they have on their report something, and I find this sometimes with something like behaviour management, if they've come from somewhere with a very particular behaviour management style and that teacher might think their behaviour management skills aren't up to par because for example, they don't have their children working in silence, we say to them when you get to your next school this target might not be as appropriate because they're quite happy for their children to talk whilst they work?

M1 Yeah

R1 Anything else you can think of during placement which would be helpful?

M4 one thing I'm not as good at with them is their file, policies and all the information that they need - I know they come with their contents list but trying to get it out of them is like drawing teeth so just to have that so we know what's expected, if they're a good teacher they can't be a good teacher without a good file

R1 Now I guess that was something that when we used to have the parity meetings you'd go with your students' files and you'd be able to cross-moderate

M4 parity meetings were good

R1 Ultimately we moved on from those because attendance was poor

M7 I think sometimes they were quite time consuming after you'd been in school all day and then going to a meeting at 4 o clock , if we could do it in a group like this…

M1 Yeah, they were like half 4 to half 6 weren't they

M4 We could it in house or across Blyth

M2 I was thinking about meeting the students – they brought all the students in and the students came across and introduced themselves before they came in

M1 There are a lot more students on a PGCE though than a SCITT?

R1 Yeah, we've got 90 this year

M2 That wold take a while to get through [laughter]

R1 Ok, anything else you would just like to think about or mention before we finish about experiences that you've had ?

M4 Something I've found difficult, which I've just remembered, is when we had a paired placement and one was good and one wasn't

M1 yeah

M4 I found that really difficult because one person was taking everything on board and doing everything that should have been shared as it was supposed to be and this person didn't even take advantage of this person but just kept 'thinking' so it wasn't just the mentor they weren't listening to advice from but it was their own paired partner and they didn't like it, they felt really uncomfortable with it

M1 I think though 'sharing is caring' and there's no point in being a teacher to reinvent the wheel

M7 Yeah, it's not a competition

M1 I do find a paired placement a difficult one though

M3 I used to like them because they bounced off each other

M7 If they're paired with another student they do want to be better than the other

M2 A bit of healthy competition is good

M1 But I wouldn't come in and do worksheets and lesson objectives and not do M7 any? It's just little things like that… yes – you could make your lessons different rather than doing the same

M2 But if you've got one who's weaker than the other you do find one ends up doing everything and the other one…

M1 And then you'd never give them a job would you?

R1 So how did you deal with that?

M6 Well, the weaker one gets the support and sometimes the other one gets left and you think you haven't supported them as well as you could have done

M2 We have split a couple of final placements, across a year so that they've been getting the same teaching experience

M6 I wonder whether when they're in a pair if they're really getting that experience of *being a teacher?*

M7 I think it's difficult to get the time for them to observe us , on a paired placement they spend a alot of time observing each other which is sometimes not good practice

M1 I think in a paired placement it might be good to do a week on a week off with literacy and numeracy so one would do literacy one week and the other would do numeracy and then swap the week after. Because they all try and get in as much as possible but it'd be better to focus on that progression in a subject?

M2 Yeah, we did that couple of years ago in a paired placement

M1 yeah, and then split the foundation subjects and then they can leave the classroom, they don't have to watch the other one

R1 Then they can use that time for instance to go and observe some phonics or get into EY

M7 We talk about them giving feedback but at first they don't have the skill to give that feedback

M1 and they go the negative straightaway don't they?

R1 Anything else you can think of… M1?

M1 They've been really good this time at filling out the Weekly Reviews because I hate it when they come and they don't know what to say.

R1 M2, anything else you can think of?

M2 No, I don't think so

R1 M3?

M3 Just make sure you don't make those first impressions, let them have a week to settle in, sometimes they can be really nervous and come out with things, says things

M2 or they can be really arrogant and cocky and they end up not being

M3 or the other way, you can think ''oh this one's a bit older, they might be stuck in their ways' but they end up being the best

M4?

M4 Nope, all talked out!

R1 M5?

M5 I just think this past couple of years has been better because of the relationship we've built up with the university is different and made a difference to everyone's placement really and it's helped us as teachers a lot, it's been really beneficial

R1 M6?

M6 No

R1 M7

M7 No

R1 Marvellous, mentoring discussion ended! Thanks everyone. M3, can you press…

Appendix 8: School B (SB) Mentor Data

R1 ********** mentors' Focus Group Discussion 3rd July 2018, ok, so if I can just hand you these pictures, maybe one between two or three if you can have a look at those pictures so they're kind of mentors who you might recognise from the media…who would you choose to have as a mentor, who would you choose to be and why?

M10 I would choose Mr Miyagi

R1 Why would you choose Mr Miyagi?

M10 Because he's very patient and forgiving but he knows that he's going… that he's going to get achievement at the end but he puts it mostly on that young boy, he's makes him keep going and persevere, in little steps he gets better and better and better… so I like Mr Miyagi

R1 Anybody else?

M9 I was going to say the teacher from Matilda… Matilda really looks up to her and idolises her and I would like to feel that some of the children feel the same way about me

M11 I would probably say the same as M9 because it's the one I identify with the most, I've been in schools myself where I have those relationships with children

R1 Ok, so why is it that you would choose to mentor students?

M11 I think it's an important thing to do because if you've got experience you should be helping other people to gain that experience and it makes your reach wider than your classroom so if you can help a student to become a good teacher then you're helping many more children rather than just your 30 in your class each year

M13 I did 4 placements when I was training to be a teacher, 2 of those I had really good mentors and 2 of them I didn't and it's the 2 who weren't good mentors that I remember the best because it was the hardest time and for me it's about making sure that when someone comes into school who's in that position that I was in , all those years ago, that it doesn't happen to them because I know how horrible it is to be doing something that's as *tough* as this and have somebody who's not fully supporting you because a couple of the ones I had didn't really want a student it was the idea of eventually having someone in the classroom and you could go and do your own thing… that was quite appealing… you definitely get a sense, when you get a mentor like that it's not about mentoring it's about using you for a different reason… and, having experienced that, I wouldn't want that for somebody that was coming into my classroom. I would like to mentor someone in the way that I feel was more supportive

R1 M12, did you want to say something?

M12 Yeah, it leads on from that a little bit… there's a tendency for some teachers to forget that at one point they were trainee teachers and you sort of leave it behind and I had good experiences as a trainee but it's important that you remember where you came from and these trainees that you mentor are coming from exactly the same place as you because there are a lot of teachers who will overlook that I think

R1 Anything else anyone?

M10 Similar to M13 I had really some good mentors but also my final one was really bad to the point where I didn't even apply for any jobs, by the time I'd finished I literally had no confidence, so for me it was to try and let that go and help someone else to do something about it but also, you know – you have to think about teachers of the future and also it's really fascinating when they're teaching my class and I get to sit and *watch* them and see what they do [murmurs of agreement] and you get that joy with a student, and the frustration – you know that you get with the children, you know when they get there and they get it and it's 'yes, come one, that was really good' in that lesson and just that chance to help someone and see… yes – I really enjoy it… most of the time

M12 It also provides a teacher with the opportunity to think about their own practice, because you're with them so often observing you're constantly thinking about what you would do in the same circumstances and of course helping them with that, you actually do think about your own practice as well so it can actually be beneficial to your own practice, even though you're the more experienced teacher, mentoring a trainee

M10 Sometimes you can watch them do something and you think that's really good, I wouldn't have thought of that [murmurs of agreement], like I say, you can learn from them

M12 Yeah, absolutely

M9 I think it's nice to watch them develop and progress from the start because some students *think* they know how to do it already and you're able to guide them and support them and they realise they don't know everything yet and when you see them at the end you can see just how much progress they've made, they may hit a rocky patch at some point and it's really good to see them come out at the other end and realise that that rocky patch was worth it in a way because they've learnt so much and have been able to develop as a result of that

M10 I think it's fair to acknowledge too that you do get the occasional student who occasionally is just very hard to help [murmurs of agreement] because occasionally we've had those who come thinking they know everything and everything you say to them is just 'but, but, but' and sometimes that's hard

R1 Let's just skip a couple of questions then, and we'll come back to those ones, what are the challenges you've had as a mentor?

M12 I think exactly what M10's just said, you do get, and I think it's a personal quality rather than anything else, people who come in and seriously think they do know more than they do and it's difficult to actually bring them round to the way of thinking because you don't want to knock a person's confidence and you don't want to say 'you don't know it all' you have to be very very careful about how you address it and how you present it to them, but there are, without doubt, people who come thinking 'I'm great, I don't need to listen' and that's hard

M13 If you leave them to teach in those lessons and let them reflect on it themselves and not be the person who says 'actually, that's not right' but let them find it out and then reflect it back on them

M10 I think if you can walk away and leave them a little bit mostly they'll come round and you can kind of like say leave them and let them fail a little bit, say, if they're bad at behaviour, go out of the room and let them go and do all those things and then can you talk to them afterwards or will they come and talk to you, which is great, but I think sometimes. Like we've had…

M8 It's when they understand that you're not criticising them but trying to help them

M10 Yeah

M8 When you're trying to suggest something… we had one student, she took it very personally like you were criticising *her* and it wasn't, it was about trying to see past that, this went wrong but actually if you did it this way it might be better so it was more about her attitude wasn't it?

M10 Yeah

M8 To get her to see it positively

R1 How have you dealt with that then?

M8 So, you're trying not to say 'well, this was bad' but towards the end of it saying 'well, this didn't go quite as you'd planned,' trying to get them to see, to take ownership of it and think 'well, I didn't do this' or 'I could have done this'

R1 And that might go back to something you were saying M10 about letting them go a little bit, I think you were as well M13, ok – well 'on you go, you try that' [general agreement] and then seeing if you can bring it back in and hoping that they're going to reflect

M12 It's a very difficult balance thought because at the end of the day you're still ultimately responsible for the children in the class and you can't *afford* to allow it to go too far, it's a tricky thing to do, to let someone run with something that you know is perhaps not going to work [general agreement] you've got to nip it in the bud really quite quickly and that's the challenging thing I think – it's not just how you address it with the trainee, it's how long you allow it to happen

M10 I think it's in a lesson or something isn't it? Not an ongoing, every week thing, it's in a certain lesson, let them try it. Sometimes, even with us, you know, when Alice says something you know we're like 'urmm' but you say 'yeah, we'll give it a try' you know – you do that all your life don't you? You're like a student aren't you [general agreement] because you continue to learn, you continue to get different cohorts, you work with different people, you get told to do things and you might think 'I'm not sure about that' but you give it a go

M9 The thing I find difficult is when you're giving them feedback and I'm always quite fair and I tell them what they did well I'm giving them feedback about what they need to improve upon but it's when they get very defensive and they start to turn the feedback into a bit of an argument, like we had somebody, a long time ago now, and he really didn't listen to *anything* I said so I had to ask the headteacher to observe him so that he knew that it wasn't just me who was saying these things erm but that character, as M12 said, it's often to do with their character. For me I find it quite hard because when I was a student, sometimes they speak to staff and you just think 'God, I would never have spoken to my mentor like that or a staff member at school' and they sometimes just don't *realise* that we're here to support and help them and the attitude they have at the beginning isn't always going to set them off on the right foot cos it's going to get people's bristles up

R1 And schools are tight communities aren't they? You're coming into a family in some ways [murmurs of agreement] aren't you?

R1 What do you expect then, sorry, we're dotting around the questions a bit here but ultimately we'll cover them, when we're thinking of that attitude being difficult to deal with, what is it that you positively want from a student? Imagine your student on their first day, what would you be looking for?

M10 Honesty, total honesty, I want to sit down with them and say what do you think you're good at, what do you think your strengths are and what do you want me to help you with? So I find you get quite a good feel then if they say, you know, I feel quite happy with these things but these are the

things I find tricky and they tend to be the students who you can work with as opposed to the one who really struggles to think of anything at all, it usually gives you a good feel and really puts the onus on them and if they're *honest* you know, even if, you know we've had failing students coming here, if they're *honest*, you know – usually the men – organisation and stuff – it they tell you then you can *help* them, you can say you need to do this and this, we can do this together, I can help you, I'm going to help you then… back off, back off, back off… if they're honest you can help them

M13 I think if someone comes in with questions as well

M12 Yes

M13 If they come in and they want to know things and ask you things rather than you having to deliver all the information to them, sometimes you do end up just *feeding* them all the information but if someone just comes in knowing exactly what they need to know to start the placement, who knows what their first task needs to be and is very clear on all of that, being very clear on all of that is helpful

M11 If they've looked through their handbook, which has been given to them

M9 To navigate some of that paperwork as teachers is difficult

M11 But they've had meetings at university and they should be looking at it and they, as students, should be going through that paperwork

M9 Yeah, sometimes they don't even have a pen and they come in for their first day and they haven't written anything down, I mean how are we supposed to tailor all of that knowledge erm so yeah – if they get a pen and notebook out it's always a good sign [general agreement], and a smile as well suppose!

M13 Even if you're nervous you can do that can't you, even if you're nervous you can paint that smile on, you have to - you know, we all know that they're nervous, we wouldn't expect them to be necessarily walking in full of confidence

M9 But I'm often nervous as well [general agreement] before I've met the student because you've got this anticipation about what they're going to be like and you don't want them to walk in with a bad attitude, you want it to go well

M13 Yeah, and you want to do it well so you want them to reflect on what you're doing positively [M9 – yes] in the same way

M12 I think a trainee who comes in and *wants* to know about the school, the wider, and I don't mean the *standards'* wider responsibilities that they can just tick, I just want to know some information about the school and the staff in the school and the routines in the school, just take a genuine interest in what's going on rather than 'it's a functional 6 weeks and I must teach these children' – there's a *huge* difference between a trainee who genuinely wants to immerse themselves in the actual day to day running of the school, I think it's vital, rather than locking them away in a cupboard and doing *their*, their little bit because it is *so much broader* than that

M13 A student not needing too much direction, you know in that first period where they're just getting to know the kids, where they're just sitting at a table

M11 To have a bit of initiative [strong general agreement from the group]

M12 – yes

M11 someone who'll go and work and not just *stand*…

R1 Ok, we'll backtrack a little bit here, in your experience, what are the three most useful things a mentor does?

M9 Observe and feedback on their lessons

R1 Ok, yep

M9 And give them pointers for how they can improve next time15:49

M8 I think challenging their thinking so not just *feeding* them the information all the time, getting them to unpick why it went wrong, what was good, this was really good but trying to unpick *why* it was good, trying to get them to be really reflective

M10 Yeah, the same as M8 and developing them, developing their confidence, subject knowledge but helping them to be reflective, that is what makes a good teacher, being reflective and sometimes it's hard when someone says 'well… where would you go next?' and they go 'ermmm… well, I'll give them bigger numbers' so it's *showing* them and then that joy of them saying 'I didn't think of that'… it's that thing of *helping* them develop

M13 modelling aswell - you doing it and them actually getting to watch, that modelling of lessons even sharing of behaviour management strategies because if you don't get that right you can't really teach, that kind of sharing of things and showing of things

R1 That goes back to something you said M12, right at the beginning about articulating your own practice, you know you just 'get on' on don't you and teach how you teach but it's important to talk to somebody else about how you do it to think about what you're doing all over again

M12 Yeah

R1 Do you think there's an optimal time to be a mentor?

M12 Do you mean stage of your career?

R1 Yes

M12 I think it depends on the individual, I think it's possible for a 2nd year teacher to be a very very good mentor because having been a trainee themselves it's still very fresh in their minds etc the flip side, the opposite of that is experienced teachers can be very experienced and proficient mentors so I don't think it matters, that's my own opinion

R1 Anyone else got any thoughts on that?

M11 Based on an individual as in on their comfort, I know as a second year teacher no way would I have wanted to mentor somebody

R1 How did you feel when when you mentored somebody for the first time then?

M11 I think it was M8, so it was quite nice [laughter] and I had been a teacher a few years then, I had been in early years for a while and I was very confident in that area so I was sure of what I was doing erm… which made me feel like I could tell

R1 Did it make you feel like 'Oh actually, I do know more than I think'

M11 Yeah, it's nice actually after the first one and you think, well – I've done a good job

M8 And she did do a good job! [laughter]

M11 Er but I personally wouldn't have wanted to have one when I was very young in my career

M8 I had one in my second year, it was a paired one and I found it hard, well – she was a difficult one, wasn't she? [turning to others - murmurs of agreement] she was quite tricky and she was a lot older than me as well so I found the age thing quite difficult and because I wasn't that experienced yet I did feel a bit like 'well, is this what I should be telling her?'… Maybe if she'd been a different student or if I'd been a different sort of character then maybe it'd have been fine

M11 Or if you had been *older* than her

M8 Yeah, yeah

M12 But I think, certainly in this school, you'd only be asked to mentor someone if the leadership thought you were capable of mentoring and that in itself, even if it's a back handed compliment, it's a compliment to you, regardless of your experience or otherwise, in your 2nd year if Alice came to you and said you should mentor I'd take that as a big plus for your own personal development

M10 I got one in my 1st year, it was an accident, because I started at the Christmas so I got one when I hadn't finished my NQT year and I got my first student, so like M8 I didn't feel ready, I wasn't happy about it, I tried, I tried my best but I don't think I did a very good job, personally, when I look back

R1 What was it that kind of unsettled you about that?

M10 I don't think I had the experience, I wasn't confident enough, subject knowledge, a bit of everything, I didn't feel that I was good enough to judge? I knew quite a bit but I didn't know enough to help someone else I don't think at that point in time?

R1 Ok, so if we think about some of those things, those challenges that some of you have alluded to in the mentoring process has anyone else had any experiences which have just *unsettled* you a little?

M11 I had a really poor student last year and we were at the point where we had to put a plan in because it looked like she wasn't going to pass her final placement and I found that really unsettling because it felt like you had their career in your hands, what were you going to do to help her pass but then also we really need to know that she *is* going to pass because she's going to go on and be a teacher so I think that's really hard, if you've got a good student, fine, you're not so worried but the ones who are failing or at the weaker end… it's just… are you doing the right thing?

R1 Is it the responsibility of it?

M11 Umhum (agreement)

R1 That does link to something you said earlier – as a mentor you're ultimately going to be influencing more children aren't you?

M11 Yeah

R1 By influencing this teacher… but it's a responsibility

M10 And that's so linked to personality where some people can say 'you're no good' without losing any sleep where if it was me and I was having to fail someone I'd be thinking 'did I fail?' I wouldn't just be thinking it was them, thinking about if I could have done more to help them so it's your personality and as we've said people get students and they don't even want one, they're just told they have to do it so… there are so many things aren't there?

R1 So what would you want or expect from whichever provider you were working with to support you with that?

M12 Well, I'm guessing most of us have done some kind of mentor training and that's useful in terms of the admin side, the paperwork side of it, I mean no one, I don't think, can teach you how to observe a lesson, you do that through your own experience butt there is so much paperwork, there are so many things a trainee has to comply with, you have to have an awareness of that so pre-training I think is vital erm.. I'm not sure other than that?

M13 Well, I had a student who sounds similar to yours M11, I mean he was really struggling and I mean he was trying hard but he hadn't really *grasped* how much work went into being a teacher I think and we had to have that difficult conversation but actually the university mentor came in and did that with me, with him, and that was really helpful, rather than have that conversation with him on my own, I'd kind of started the conversation with him – just in feedback and things like that but it wasn't until we sat with the university mentor, when there were two of us, that I had someone helping me to sort of say 'are you sure this is what you want to do?' because it had got to that point where we didn't know whether he was really cut out to be a teacher, it needed to be as black and white and make him go away and think about it , I didn't find that easy to do so having someone else from the university to do it with me was much better, and actually, he went on to do an additional placement, in between two placements I think, in between but I don't know what happened after that but having that backup and support so it's not left to you when you're in that situation is *really* important.

R1 And again, it's that responsibility of taking that decision on your own, it's just much easier isn't it…

M13 Because sometimes it feels like universities don't *want* to have failing students and we don't want to have failing students but sometimes there's that feeling of 'are they going to let me say this person isn't really cut out for it' or will that not go down very well, I've always found them to be very supportive… but I know it's a worry for universities to have students who aren't going to make it, no university ever wants one of their students as a failing student on their numbers, it's as it is anywhere

M11 It comes back to you aswell… if I pass this person and I'm the one who's written their final report that goes into their reference and they go into a school and it's that this person doesn't match this…

M12 Yeah, 'they were at *Benton Park*'

M11 It is a worry that it reflects on you, you want them to do well because you want to have done your job well and you want them to do well so that they can teach well but if they don't it is going to come back to you at some point or you would worry that it would

M12 But there's nothing that's fool proof [M11 – no (in agreement)] you could get someone who, on their previous placement got all ones but what's one on one school is not necessarily viewed as one in another school and it's a very very difficult balance, that's where friction can be caused because you can say 'well, actually, I got all ones, I got all ones on my last placement…' and I don't think there's anything unis can do about it – there's the selection process, the schools that you choose, obviously you're thankful to all the schools

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now, when we get observed, Alice doesn't give us a grade, you know erm Ofsted don't really give grades anymore, I find the grading thing quite tricky sometimes, they don't quite fit into one or the other

M11 The university I've just being working with didn't want any students passing, or they couldn't really pass, on 3s,with requires improvement so I'm going to have to put this or this because they deserve to pass but you get the vibe that they have to go through on 'good'…

R1 So does this come back to you feeling that you need to be honest and being supported in being honest [general agreement]

R1 Ok, so final question, is there anything else that providers could do to support you in the mentoring process?

M9 I suppose going through with the students, before they come in, what our expectations will be and talking to them about their attitudes and things like that you know, making sure you make a good first impression, ensure you are prepared. A couple of students I've had have emailed me beforehand to introduce themselves and I found that really helpful because I was able to reply back and say 'I'm a really experienced teacher' and just to give them that 'this is where it's going to be from the beginning' and I think if they just had a bit more discussion about not going in thinking you know everything, because that's not going to bode you well. I don't know if they currently have any of that preparation about…

M11 Yeah, not just the stuff in their booklets but a personal…

M9 Yeah and how important it is to be writing things down and showing that eagerness erm…

M12 and I understand that staffing is an issue and numbers are an issue and that you have that vast number of trainees but at some point during the placement a link tutor will come in and observe and I often think that should be the *very first* observation of the placement, done jointly with the mentor so they can sit and they can agree, this is where the trainee's at now and even if it's not set in stone and I accept that we all teach bad lessons from time to time but we can actually plan that moving forward together, there'd just be more togetherness and it would actually give some trainees, not all, but *some* trainees some focus knowing that their link tutor has been involved in the process… I don't think it's practical…

R1 Do you mean like setting a baseline assessment?

M12 Yeah, almost like you do with the kids but I'm fully aware that perhaps that's not the most practical solution

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M12 Which is why I think it's the perfect time, when they're at their least…

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M11 I think quite early on, the earlier the better

M9 or in the middle

M11 Not at the end of the placement

M9 Nick tends to come in at the end and I feel it's a bit late then and we can't really do anything about it, maybe if he came in after a couple of weeks after they've settled but not in weeks 5 or 6

R1 I guess that's just more about moderation

M9 Confirming what we think

R1 Yes

R1 Let's pause there, I could keep talking about this for a long time because it's very interesting but I realise it's a hot day and you all want to go home so if I can just go round the circle and if there's anything else you want to add

R1 Beth?

M8 No, that's fine

R1 M9?

M9 No

R1 Julie?

M10 I don't think so

R1 Holly?

M11 Nothing

R1 M12?

M12 No, thank you

R1 M13?

M13 No

R1 That's great, thank you everybody

Appendix 9: Coded School B (SB) Mentor Data

R1 School B mentors' Focus Group Discussion 3rd July 2018, ok, so if I can just hand you these pictures, maybe one between two or three if you can have a look at those pictures so they're kind of mentors who you might recognise from the media…who would you choose to have as a mentor, who would you choose to be and why?

M10 I would choose Mr Miyagi

R1 Why would you choose Mr Miyagi?

M10 Because he's very patient and forgiving but he knows that he's going… that he's going to get achievement at the end but he puts it mostly on that young boy, he's makes him keep going and persevere, in little steps he gets better and better and better… so I like Mr Miyagi

R1 Anybody else?

M9 I was going to say the teacher from Matilda… Matilda really looks up to her and idolises her and I would like to feel that some of the children feel the same way about me

M11 I would probably say the same as M9 because it's the one I identify with the most, I've been in schools myself where I have those relationships with children

R1 Ok, so why is it that you would choose to mentor students?

M11 I think it's an important thing to do because if you've got experience you should be helping other people to gain that experience and it makes your reach wider than your classroom so if you can help a student to become a good teacher then you're helping many more children rather than just your 30 in your class each year

M13 I did 4 placements when I was training to be a teacher, 2 of those I had really good mentors and 2 of them I didn't and it's the 2 who weren't good mentors that I remember the best because it was the hardest time and for me it's about making sure that when someone comes into school who's in that position that I was in , all those years ago, that it doesn't happen to them because I know how horrible it is to be doing something that's as *tough* as this and have somebody who's not fully supporting you because a couple of the ones I had didn't really want a student it was the idea of eventually having someone in the classroom and you could go and do your own thing… that was quite appealing… you definitely get a sense, when you get a mentor like that it's not about mentoring it's about using you for a different reason… and, having experienced that, I wouldn't want that for somebody that was coming into my classroom. I would like to mentor someone in the way that I feel was more supportive

R1 M12, did you want to say something?

M12 Yeah, it leads on from that a little bit… there's a tendency for some teachers to forget that at one point they were trainee teachers and you sort of leave it behind and I had good experiences as a trainee but it's important that you remember where you came from and these trainees that you mentor are coming from exactly the same place as you because there are a lot of teachers who will overlook that I think

R1 Anything else anyone?

M10 Similar to M12I had really some good mentors but also my final one was really bad to the point where I didn't even apply for any jobs, by the time I'd finished I literally had no confidence, so for me

it was to try and let that go and help someone else to do something about it but also, you know – you have to think about teachers of the future and also it's really fascinating when they're teaching my class and I get to sit and *watch* them and see what they do [murmurs of agreement] and you get that joy with a student, and the frustration – you know that you get with the children, you know when they get there and they get it and it's 'yes, come one, that was really good' in that lesson and just that chance to help someone and see… yes – I really enjoy it… most of the time

M12 It also provides a teacher with the opportunity to think about their own practice, because you're with them so often observing you're constantly thinking about what you would do in the same circumstances and of course helping them with that, you actually do think about your own practice as well so it can actually be beneficial to your own practice, even though you're the more experienced teacher, mentoring a trainee

M10 Sometimes you can watch them do something and you think that's really good, I wouldn't have thought of that [murmurs of agreement], like I say, you can learn from them

M12 Yeah, absolutely

M9 I think it's nice to watch them develop and progress from the start because some students *think* they know how to do it already and you're able to guide them and support them and they realise they don't know everything yet and when you see them at the end you can see just how much progress they've made, they may hit a rocky patch at some point and it's really good to see them come out at the other end and realise that that rocky patch was worth it in a way because they've learnt so much and have been able to develop as a result of that

M10 I think it's fair to acknowledge too that you do get the occasional student who occasionally is just very hard to help [murmurs of agreement] because occasionally we've had those who come thinking they know everything and everything you say to them is just 'but, but, but' and sometimes that's hard

R1 Let's just skip a couple of questions then, and we'll come back to those ones, what are the challenges you've had as a mentor?

M12 I think exactly what M10's just said, you do get, and I think it's a personal quality rather than anything else, people who come in and seriously think they do know more than they do and it's difficult to actually bring them round to the way of thinking because you don't want to knock a person's confidence and you don't want to say 'you don't know it all' you have to be very very careful about how you address it and how you present it to them, but there are, without doubt, people who come thinking 'I'm great, I don't need to listen' and that's hard

M13 If you leave them to teach in those lessons and let them reflect on it themselves and not be the person who says 'actually, that's not right' but let them find it out and then reflect it back on them

M10 I think if you can walk away and leave them a little bit mostly they'll come round and you can kind of like say leave them and let them fail a little bit, say, if they're bad at behaviour, go out of the room and let them go and do all those things and then can you talk to them afterwards or will they come and talk to you, which is great, but I think sometimes. Like we've had…

M8 It's when they understand that you're not criticising them but trying to help them

M10 Yeah

M8 When you're trying to suggest something… we had one student, she took it very personally like you were criticising *her* and it wasn't, it was about trying to see past that, this went wrong but actually if you did it this way it might be better so it was more about her attitude wasn't it?

M10 Yeah

M8 To get her to see it positively

R1 How have you dealt with that then?

M8 So, you're trying not to say 'well, this was bad' but towards the end of it saying 'well, this didn't go quite as you'd planned,' trying to get them to see, to take ownership of it and think 'well, I didn't do this' or 'I could have done this'

R1 And that might go back to something you were saying M10 about letting them go a little bit, I think you were as well M13, ok – well 'on you go, you try that' [general agreement] and then seeing if you can bring it back in and hoping that they're going to reflect

M12 It's a very difficult balance thought because at the end of the day you're still ultimately responsible for the children in the class and you can't *afford* to allow it to go too far, it's a tricky thing to do, to let someone run with something that you know is perhaps not going to work [general agreement] you've got to nip it in the bud really quite quickly and that's the challenging thing I think – it's not just how you address it with the trainee, it's how long you allow it to happen

M10 I think it's in a lesson or something isn't it? Not an ongoing, every week thing, it's in a certain lesson, let them try it. Sometimes, even with us, you know, when Alice says something you know we're like 'urmm' but you say 'yeah, we'll give it a try' you know – you do that all your life don't you? You're like a student aren't you [general agreement] because you continue to learn, you continue to get different cohorts, you work with different people, you get told to do things and you might think 'I'm not sure about that' but you give it a go

M9 The thing I find difficult is when you're giving them feedback and I'm always quite fair and I tell them what they did well I'm giving them feedback about what they need to improve upon but it's when they get very defensive and they start to turn the feedback into a bit of an argument, like we had somebody, a long time ago now, and he really didn't listen to *anything* I said so I had to ask the headteacher to observe him so that he knew that it wasn't just me who was saying these things erm but that character, as M12 said, it's often to do with their character. For me I find it quite hard because when I was a student, sometimes they speak to staff and you just think 'God, I would never have spoken to my mentor like that or a staff member at school' and they sometimes just don't *realise* that we're here to support and help them and the attitude they have at the beginning isn't always going to set them off on the right foot cos it's going to get people's bristles up

R1 And schools are tight communities aren't they? You're coming into a family in some ways [murmurs of agreement] aren't you?

R1 What do you expect then, sorry, we're dotting around the questions a bit here but ultimately we'll cover them, when we're thinking of that attitude being difficult to deal with, what is it that you positively want from a student? Imagine your student on their first day, what would you be looking for?

M10 Honesty, total honesty, I want to sit down with them and say what do you think you're good at, what do you think your strengths are and what do you want me to help you with? So I find you get quite a good feel then if they say, you know, I feel quite happy with these things but these are the

things I find tricky and they tend to be the students who you can work with as opposed to the one who really struggles to think of anything at all, it usually gives you a good feel and really puts the onus on them and if they're *honest* you know, even if, you know we've had failing students coming here, if they're *honest*, you know – usually the men – organisation and stuff – it they tell you then you can *help* them, you can say you need to do this and this, we can do this together, I can help you, I'm going to help you then… back off, back off, back off… if they're honest you can help them

M13 I think if someone comes in with questions as well

M12 Yes

M13 If they come in and they want to know things and ask you things rather than you having to deliver all the information to them, sometimes you do end up just *feeding* them all the information but if someone just comes in knowing exactly what they need to know to start the placement, who knows what their first task needs to be and is very clear on all of that, being very clear on all of that is helpful

M11 If they've looked through their handbook, which has been given to them

M9 To navigate some of that paperwork as teachers is difficult

M11 But they've had meetings at university and they should be looking at it and they, as students, should be going through that paperwork

M9 Yeah, sometimes they don't even have a pen and they come in for their first day and they haven't written anything down, I mean how are we supposed to tailor all of that knowledge erm so yeah – if they get a pen and notebook out it's always a good sign [general agreement], and a smile as well suppose!

M13 Even if you're nervous you can do that can't you, even if you're nervous you can paint that smile on, you have to - you know, we all know that they're nervous, we wouldn't expect them to be necessarily walking in full of confidence

M9 But I'm often nervous as well [general agreement] before I've met the student because you've got this anticipation about what they're going to be like and you don't want them to walk in with a bad attitude, you want it to go well

M13 Yeah, and you want to do it well so you want them to reflect on what you're doing positively [M9 – yes] in the same way

M12 I think a trainee who comes in and *wants* to know about the school, the wider, and I don't mean the *standards'* wider responsibilities that they can just tick, I just want to know some information about the school and the staff in the school and the routines in the school, just take a genuine interest in what's going on rather than 'it's a functional 6 weeks and I must teach these children' – there's a *huge* difference between a trainee who genuinely wants to immerse themselves in the actual day to day running of the school, I think it's vital, rather than locking them away in a cupboard and doing *their*, their little bit because it is *so much broader* than that

M13 A student not needing too much direction, you know in that first period where they're just getting to know the kids, where they're just sitting at a table

M11 To have a bit of initiative [strong general agreement from the group]

M12 – yes

M11 someone who'll go and work and not just *stand*…

R1 Ok, we'll backtrack a little bit here, in your experience, what are the three most useful things a mentor does?

M9 Observe and feedback on their lessons

R1 Ok, yep

M9 And give them pointers for how they can improve next time15:49

M8 I think challenging their thinking so not just *feeding* them the information all the time, getting them to unpick why it went wrong, what was good, this was really good but trying to unpick *why* it was good, trying to get them to be really reflective

M10 Yeah, the same as M8 and developing them, developing their confidence, subject knowledge but helping them to be reflective, that is what makes a good teacher, being reflective and sometimes it's hard when someone says 'well… where would you go next?' and they go 'ermmm… well, I'll give them bigger numbers' so it's *showing* them and then that joy of them saying 'I didn't think of that'… it's that thing of *helping* them develop

M13 modelling aswell - you doing it and them actually getting to watch, that modelling of lessons even sharing of behaviour management strategies because if you don't get that right you can't really teach, that kind of sharing of things and showing of things

R1 That goes back to something you said M12, right at the beginning about articulating your own practice, you know you just 'get on' on don't you and teach how you teach but it's important to talk to somebody else about how you do it to think about what you're doing all over again

M12 Yeah

R1 Do you think there's an optimal time to be a mentor?

M12 Do you mean stage of your career?

R1 Yes

M12 I think it depends on the individual, I think it's possible for a 2nd year teacher to be a very very good mentor because having been a trainee themselves it's still very fresh in their minds etc the flip side, the opposite of that is experienced teachers can be very experienced and proficient mentors so I don't think it matters, that's my own opinion

R1 Anyone else got any thoughts on that?

M11 Based on an individual as in on their comfort, I know as a second year teacher no way would I have wanted to mentor somebody

R1 How did you feel when when you mentored somebody for the first time then?

M11 I think it was M8, so it was quite nice [laughter] and I had been a teacher a few years then, I had been in early years for a while and I was very confident in that area so I was sure of what I was doing erm… which made me feel like I could tell

R1 Did it make you feel like 'Oh actually, I do know more than I think'

M11 Yeah, it's nice actually after the first one and you think, well – I've done a good job

M8 And she did do a good job! [laughter]

M11 Er but I personally wouldn't have wanted to have one when I was very young in my career

M8 I had one in my second year, it was a paired one and I found it hard, well – she was a difficult one, wasn't she? [turning to others - murmurs of agreement] she was quite tricky and she was a lot older than me as well so I found the age thing quite difficult and because I wasn't that experienced yet I did feel a bit like 'well, is this what I should be telling her?'… Maybe if she'd been a different student or if I'd been a different sort of character then maybe it'd have been fine

M11 Or if you had been *older* than her

M8 Yeah, yeah

M12 But I think, certainly in this school, you'd only be asked to mentor someone if the leadership thought you were capable of mentoring and that in itself, even if it's a back handed compliment, it's a compliment to you, regardless of your experience or otherwise, in your 2nd year if Alice came to you and said you should mentor I'd take that as a big plus for your own personal development

M10 I got one in my 1st year, it was an accident, because I started at the Christmas so I got one when I hadn't finished my NQT year and I got my first student, so like M8 I didn't feel ready, I wasn't happy about it, I tried, I tried my best but I don't think I did a very good job, personally, when I look back

R1 What was it that kind of unsettled you about that?

M10 I don't think I had the experience, I wasn't confident enough, subject knowledge, a bit of everything, I didn't feel that I was good enough to judge? I knew quite a bit but I didn't know enough to help someone else I don't think at that point in time?

R1 Ok, so if we think about some of those things, those challenges that some of you have alluded to in the mentoring process has anyone else had any experiences which have just *unsettled* you a little?

M11 I had a really poor student last year and we were at the point where we had to put a plan in because it looked like she wasn't going to pass her final placement and I found that really unsettling because it felt like you had their career in your hands, what were you going to do to help her pass but then also we really need to know that she *is* going to pass because she's going to go on and be a teacher so I think that's really hard, if you've got a good student, fine, you're not so worried but the ones who are failing or at the weaker end… it's just… are you doing the right thing?

R1 Is it the responsibility of it?

M11 Umhum (agreement)

R1 That does link to something you said earlier – as a mentor you're ultimately going to be influencing more children aren't you?

M11 Yeah

R1 By influencing this teacher… but it's a responsibility

M10 And that's so linked to personality where some people can say 'you're no good' without losing any sleep where if it was me and I was having to fail someone I'd be thinking 'did I fail?' I wouldn't just be thinking it was them, thinking about if I could have done more to help them so it's your personality and as we've said people get students and they don't even want one, they're just told they have to do it so… there are so many things aren't there?

R1 So what would you want or expect from whichever provider you were working with to support you with that?

M12 Well, I'm guessing most of us have done some kind of mentor training and that's useful in terms of the admin side, the paperwork side of it, I mean no one, I don't think, can teach you how to observe a lesson, you do that through your own experience butt there is so much paperwork, there are so many things a trainee has to comply with, you have to have an awareness of that so pre-training I think is vital erm.. I'm not sure other than that?

M13 Well, I had a student who sounds similar to yours M11, I mean he was really struggling and I mean he was trying hard but he hadn't really *grasped* how much work went into being a teacher I think and we had to have that difficult conversation but actually the university mentor came in and did that with me, with him, and that was really helpful, rather than have that conversation with him on my own, I'd kind of started the conversation with him – just in feedback and things like that but it wasn't until we sat with the university mentor, when there were two of us, that I had someone helping me to sort of say 'are you sure this is what you want to do?' because it had got to that point where we didn't know whether he was really cut out to be a teacher, it needed to be as black and white and make him go away and think about it , I didn't find that easy to do so having someone else from the university to do it with me was much better, and actually, he went on to do an additional placement, in between two placements I think, in between but I don't know what happened after that but having that backup and support so it's not left to you when you're in that situation is *really* important.

R1 And again, it's that responsibility of taking that decision on your own, it's just much easier isn't it…

M13 Because sometimes it feels like universities don't *want* to have failing students and we don't want to have failing students but sometimes there's that feeling of 'are they going to let me say this person isn't really cut out for it' or will that not go down very well, I've always found them to be very supportive… but I know it's a worry for universities to have students who aren't going to make it, no university ever wants one of their students as a failing student on their numbers, it's as it is anywhere

M11 It comes back to you aswell… if I pass this person and I'm the one who's written their final report that goes into their reference and they go into a school and it's that this person doesn't match this…

M12 Yeah, 'they were at *School B'*

M11 It is a worry that it reflects on you, you want them to do well because you want to have done your job well and you want them to do well so that they can teach well but if they don't it is going to come back to you at some point or you would worry that it would

M12 But there's nothing that's fool proof [M11 – no (in agreement)] you could get someone who, on their previous placement got all ones but what's one on one school is not necessarily viewed as one in another school and it's a very very difficult balance, that's where friction can be caused because you can say 'well, actually, I got all ones, I got all ones on my last placement…' and I don't think there's anything unis can do about it – there's the selection process, the schools that you choose, obviously you're thankful to all the schools

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R1 So does this come back to you feeling that you need to be honest and being supported in being honest [general agreement]

R1 Ok, so final question, is there anything else that providers could do to support you in the mentoring process?

M9 I suppose going through with the students, before they come in, what our expectations will be and talking to them about their attitudes and things like that you know, making sure you make a good first impression, ensure you are prepared. A couple of students I've had have emailed me beforehand to introduce themselves and I found that really helpful because I was able to reply back and say 'I'm a really experienced teacher' and just to give them that 'this is where it's going to be from the beginning' and I think if they just had a bit more discussion about not going in thinking you know everything, because that's not going to bode you well. I don't know if they currently have any of that preparation about…

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R1 Do you mean like setting a baseline assessment?

M12 Yeah, almost like you do with the kids but I'm fully aware that perhaps that's not the most practical solution

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M10 I think it's too much straightaway, 2 people 'boom', sitting watching me and I've just got here

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M9 or in the middle

M11 Not at the end of the placement

M9 Nick tends to come in at the end and I feel it's a bit late then and we can't really do anything about it, maybe if he came in after a couple of weeks after they've settled but not in weeks 5 or 6

R1 I guess that's just more about moderation

M9 Confirming what we think

R1 Yes

R1 Let's pause there, I could keep talking about this for a long time because it's very interesting but I realise it's a hot day and you all want to go home so if I can just go round the circle and if there's anything else you want to add

R1 M8?

M8 No, that's fine

R1 M9?

M9 No

R1 M10?

M10 I don't think so

R1 M11?

M11 Nothing

R1 M12?

M12 No, thank you

R1 M13?

M13 No

R1 That's great, thank you everybody

Appendix 10: Example of Compressing & Assembling Data from Student Questionnaires

Feedback

Participant	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
	In your experience what are the three most useful things a mentor does?	What have you learned from your mentor?	What challenges have you encountered during the mentoring process?	How did you deal with those challenges?	Did any aspect of the mentoring process unsettle you?	If so, please explain	How did you deal with that?	How could your programme have prepared you in dealing with that response?	What did your mentor do to support you?	How did you try to ensure that your experience of being mentored was positive?
BA 15	Informal observations as well as informal observations When giving us targets mentor models them to show clearly	Most mentors allow us to take risks and learn for ourselves and then they help us see what went well Planning is essential	Many mentors don't see us as BA Year 2 students and they expect a high standard from the outset which is difficult to achieve if this is a	Consistently ask for feedback to meet their standards It's really hard to try and fit in to an unfamiliar school. It really helped having a partner.	TA's have set ways and many discuss us students negatively when we don't follow their way, which could be because of lack of experience	TA's are a very valuable asset with mentoring. Majority of them are more useful than the mentor themselves. However they enjoy discussing	I asked my mentor if there was anything I could improve professionally and kept asking the TAs if I've picked up 'bad habits' but they still didn't tell me	It couldn't – I was very worried about this for a while but my partner helped the situation	I didn't raise it as an issue for them to support me. I didn't want to jeopardise professional relationships	Always smiling and asking for feedback to improve constantly Making jokes about my development to break the ice, positive relationshi

	On first day get us to do a simple task (ie read a story, help with a lesson) to show children we are teachers		new and unfamiliar year group Many mentors don't make you feel comfortable		During BP@P my teacher shouted at a pupil unnecessarily and expected me to carry out their punishment by taking them to the headmaster, even though I didn't agree	my flaws within the lesson or how I handled a situation which didn't help me with confidence. But they never came to me about the problem, which could have helped me develop professionally.				p are important
BA40	Provides feedback and constructive criticism in order for me to improve my practice and give me the	Different teaching techniques Effective behaviour management Being very flexible	Some, I felt, weren't critical enough. I think possibly some criticism was sugar coated and this	I prompted for more constructive criticism.	I was nervous during my first observed full class teaching but it got easier. I think when the mentor	It is so because you then begin to think of what you just did for them to write something down and if it was	I just tried to keep my focus on the children.	*BLANK*	Helped me improve where I needed it and often gave me positive feedback and reinforcement and	*BLANK*

	best opportunities. Explain their own experience and teaching techniques which I can adapt or learn from.		wasn't helping me to learn from my mistakes and improve my practice fully		would write things down as you were teaching is unsettling.	good or bad which then puts you off your teaching for a while.			without this I doubt I would have been able to have the confidence to teach being observed.	
BA48	Allows you to settle into the school environment Support and feedback Gives you ideas	Ideas for lessons and how to structure them	Not agreeing 100% with a piece of feedback	Discussed the feedback in more detail during weekly meetings	No, my mentor always supports me	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	A lot of positive feedback as well as always giving me ideas and suggestions	I listened to the feedback and put it into practice to make sure that I made the most of the support
BA54	Supports me as a teacher Offers guidance on how to improve Respects me as a teacher –	Different strategies that can be used	Receiving feedback that I don't entirely agree with	Accepted the feedback and took guidance on board	Being assessed on teaching	It can be difficult to take criticism, even if it will benefit my teaching	Learn to accept guidance and support	-	Explained how to improve and gave me tips	Accepting and appreciating the support given and putting it into practice

	not a student									
BA57	Supports in teaching experience Supports in planning Feedback on teaching	Teaching practice skills Behaviour management strategies Planning information/guidance	Lack of support/feedback/targets Unable to access all planning	Asked my mentor for more specific feedback – what could be improved Asked questions around teaching/planning	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	The programme advised us to accept any feedback and take any feedback as positive. Ask questions to mentor	Provided me with planning (medium term) to allow me to plan my own lesson from this. Involved me in after school activities such as staff meetings and parents' evenings	Accept any feedback given and to plan future lessons/delivery of lessons around this. Have an open minded approach/ adaptable
BA58	Supports your teacher training Supports in planning Provides you with targets and feedback	What my strengths and weaknesses are as a student teacher Strategies to cope with different situations and pupils	Lack of negative feedback/targets Too much positive feedback (nothing to work towards)	Ask questions and ask for specific targets or improvements for the future	No	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	The programme could have provided more opportunities to be given specific targets when it comes to	Provided me with their contact details so I could email her my plans/concerns and so she could help	Created a good relationship with my mentor and respected her opinions and advice and took these on board

								teaching rather than just targets for assignments	me with this	
BA59	Helps to guide you into knowing the school/class Shows you the different ways to monitor and assess Supports your planning and delivering of lessons	How much planning and assessing needs to be done continuously in order to support pupil progress	Trying to adapt my teaching to suit the mentor's way and meet their expectations	I tried bringing in my own teaching techniques whilst consulting with the mentor to ensure she was happy with this	No	*BLANK*	*BLANK*	The programme encouraged us to ask questions when unsure and be open to positive/negative feedback	She regularly gave me feedback and targets to meet She also encouraged me to take control of the class on my own	I took any feedback/targets positively and used these to plan and better my teaching This showed I was appreciating the feedback
BA74	Supports with planning Answers questions about teaching/children in the	Teaching strategies, how to differentiate effectively, practical maths ideas,	The mentor finding time to highlight the grade descriptor	She took it home on a night to ensure it wasn't rushed. This allowed	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Supported me when creating lesson plans, read them and suggested changes.	Remained positive and professional throughout, took on feedback and acted

	class/school Offers teaching methods	roles within the school, behaviour management strategies, how to effectively deploy support staff		more time to fill it out.					Allowed me to complete assessment with her support. Went through feedback of my teaching straight after	upon it. I took initiative in school and became involved with the wider school life.
BA83	Discuss and share teaching and assessment strategies that they implement Provide feedback on lessons, inform on how to improve Provide support in planning lessons (particularly with	AfL strategies in starters, main teach, independent work and plenaries (and marking) How to plan a sequence of lessons in maths and English Behaviour management strategies	My reluctance to ask for help – mentor had two PGCE students in the first 4 weeks and I felt that their support was prioritised.	I suppose I tried to figure things out for myself – I had no issues, really. When it came to seeking advice about subject knowledge I would find the subject leader and speak to them quite	My mentor seemed unsure as to how to complete my grade descriptor at first and felt more comfortable in doing it at home, as she had very little time to do so at school	See above	I tried to ensure that our weekly meetings left enough time for my mentor to fill out my grade descripted and weekly evaluative sheet with me but she felt uncomfortable perhaps? Or just wanted to get home earlier?	Perhaps someone could have contacted her to discuss the weekly evaluation /grade descriptor process	Feedback on lesson observations and planning She helped me to plan my first sequence of lessons and explained how to do/alter this depending on AfL	Positive, professional relationship with my mentor. Going the extra mile to do things/jobs /events/experiences/intervention that would benefit my mentor and the children

	regard to differentiation/activities)	Changing the pace of lessons, being flexible and providing support (scaffolding, modelling)		informally about it.						
BA85	Gives you honest, constructive feedback on your lessons Doesn't put you down if a lesson went badly Sees you as part of the team, not as a 'scivvy'	I observed her teaching reception children so have learnt about the ways in which these children learn best and how to implement different strategies into lessons. Observing her behaviour managem	Getting feedback – she would leave my sheet on the table and I wouldn't know if I could take it or not. She gave me verbal feedback for my first lesson but for none of the others	I asked her for verbal feedback myself. My mentor never filled in any of my weekly reviews so I had to get the other reception teacher to do them	My mentor was quite supportive but sometimes I felt like she would say one thing to my face and another behind my back	This sometime smade me feel like I wasn't doing well and that she possibly saw me as a pain	I tried to do exactly what she asked me and tried not to get in the way or be annoying. This is because there had been issues with other students at that time and I was worried she viewed me in the same light.	I'm not sure they could have. It was more an unforeseen issue that you can't prepare for and I was probably over thinking things and thinking there wasan issue when there wasn't	Helped me with what to include in my lessons to make them better, helped me improve my phonics knowledge and also answered any questions I had about certain matters	I tried to work alongside her and not give her any irrelevant work that could make her less happy to have me in her classroom

		ent I learnt how I don't want to do this.								
BA90	Gives feedback Supports you Helps you throughout your placement	That often that support isn't given continuously In my last placement she was a lot better and helped me improve	If they are not your class teacher you rarely see them If done well (in last placement) sometimes feedback can be hard to hear	Try and fit around them, see and speak whenever they are free Improve these with guidance (if given)	Not having a mentor there when sometimes you need them	Not having a mentor there when sometimes you need them	Try and speak to them whenever I could.	Ask mentors to be in the setting, mine was only in the setting in the mornings	Feedback Support Encouragement	Being proactive, not leaving it to them Making sure I have done weekly evaluations etc.
PG1	Feedback (constructive) Model good teaching Supports developing behaviour	Some strategies for: Teaching, differentiation, accessibility and how to assess students	Mentors not welcoming questions or emotional support. Lack of support in learning new things/trying new	Asked specific questions around feedback sought emotional support elsewhere	Not knowing where else to seek support informally Fear of saying you weren't confident in	My mentor was not approachable and felt that I could not discuss issues with my link tutor as they knew the head	I just got on with the situation, spoke to my peers and didn't say anything after the issue was raised. Counted	We were told to speak to link tutors or just get on with it to an extent. More informal pastoral support that would	She gave me feedback weekly. Observed lessons. Provided examples of planning.	Smiled, was polite, worked as many hours as I could, got involved with extracurricular activities, tried to go out of my

	management		things. Vague feedback until tackled.		something and being rebutted. Lack of emotional support	teacher and teachers and my information/issues were not confidential. If I did raise an issue the problem was with me or it was not my implied fault which was not the case (not reflected in feedback or reports.	down the days to the end of placement and cried!	be from an outsider to the course and confidential.		way to help the teacher and complete work and additional tasks with the children
PG2	Teach me how to learn from mistakes positively. How to be flexible in	How to teach a variety of children in terms of behavioural needs.	Communication (on assessed placement) Definitely dropped in	Tried to communicate with her myself several times.	Towards the end of my placement communication failed and I struggled	What really unsettled me was the overall impact one person	I acknowledged there was a problem so set up a meeting with my	Make sure <u>all</u> mentors know what is expected	At the start of placement we talked through everything required to be	I was aware of how professionalism affected people's perception

	teaching approaches in daily lessons. Guide (but not fully instruct) on how to plan quickly, effectively and creatively	That staying calm in situations is key. To prioritise planning effectively	last 7 days. Confusion over reports and tasks necessary to complete. Not feeling like I could make any mistakes and when I did, I wasn't allowed to target it	Accepted and implemented feedback into future planning and teaching. Sought advice from other professional. Hold regular communication with link tutor Kept my head down and carried on.	with not knowing precisely what I had done wrong and how to rectify the situation. I speculated as to a teaching mistake I had made but no amount of apology and seeking advice seemed to enable her. To forget the mistake. The fact she made a decision about me that affected feedback	could have on my confidence and belief in myself in myself as a teacher. I realise part of that was down to me – and boy has my resilience increased! But mentors are there to show us how to try things out and support us in our learning, and unfortunately this just didn't happen at	link tutor for when placement had finished to discuss the problems I had encountered, and the confusing final placement report I received. Luckily, my link tutor was just as confused and did everything he could to rebuild my confidence and remind me why I want to be a	of them (training?) Make sure there are things in place to make sure students don't feel like this again – I was reminded this is one person after placement had finished Just confidence on University's part that all mentors know what to expect, how to support and what	successful on placement (assessment, planning, behaviour management, etc.) However; this faltered towards the end.	of me so I made sure to ask questions, seek advice, implement feedback and imitate teaching approaches I had observed from my mentor. I was also determined I could end the placement positively so I kept trying to reopen lines of communication

					in several areas that confused myself and 3 tutors back at university when reading my final report	perhaps the most crucial part of my placement .	teacher and what I can do.	is really important.		
PG6	Monitors your progress as a trainee teacher. Gives you advice Recognises your strengths and weaknesses	Behaviour management strategies.	I did not have any support as this was a paired placement . This may have been beneficial in tempo of my progress	N/A	Receiving feedback together as a pair. May have been better to have small meetings.	N/A	N/A	Placing students in separate classes.	Always asked if I was ok and needed any support Provided me with any key information needed.	I responded to feedback by incorporating any comments into future lessons
PG14	Provide realistic and supported	I learned the importance of	Often it was difficult to find time	We did not, we had to work with	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Gave us many opportunities to	I was able to take critique and

	opportunities for professional development and training. Provide advice, support and feedback on a personal level Gives the opportunity to be creative	trusting and believing in my own practice	to have in depth meetings with my mentor on a weekly basis	what we were given					teach and be creative with my practice as possible	feedback and utilise it. I valued the advice and support given. I felt this kept things positive.
PG19	Gives feedback for observed lessons Helps with any queries	The needs of children in the class	Throughout placement I felt my mentor offered inconsistent support. I felt the majority of time I was planning	I had a strong bond with my placement partner which helped a lot. Also I was confident to ask the	Yes.	From early in the placement, I taught many lessons and never received feedback, or praise – NOTHING. This was	Just had to get on with it and develop in as many areas as possible	Link tutor could meet with class mentors at the beginning	Give some advice on observed lessons Allowed me to use the computer in the morning and use	I remained positive, enthusiastic and always tried hard. I respected the classroom and teacher

			and teaching without advice or verbal feedback	other teacher for advice and support		rather draining. Then I assessed placement, the feedback was negative and most elements were RI and inadequate			her fob to access equipment	and acted professional at all times
PG25	Help with collaborative planning Supports you Useful feedback	Behaviour management strategies How to use time efficiently Subject knowledge / schemes	Pace Behaviour management	Taking on feedback Making detailed observations	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Informed me of policies Informed me of planning Supported me and discussed lessons throughout the day	Taking on positive and negative feedback staying professional Maintaining relationships
PG27	Support Feedback	How to improve my	Did not have mentor for	Had to just continue without	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

	Advice	strategies by giving me constant feedback after every lesson. Whether assessed or not	a couple of weeks	her guidance and support until she returned						
PG32	Support Inform Constructive feedback	School routine Subject knowledge	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Always there, helped with everything including placement Friendly and supportive Very approachable	Friendly at all times Developed a professional relationship Responded to feedback
PG33	Support Teachers Guidance	Teaching strategies Behaviour management	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Very helpful Friendly and supportive	Developed professional relationship

									, settled nerves Very approachable	Responded to feedback positively.
PG37	Guide Advise Encourage	Learnt a lot about how to improve on my weaknesses. She taught me how to self-assess and build upon what didn't meet the required standard	Felt that when I was being graded, the mentor graded my lesson in a generic "At this stage you should be at this level, therefore that's what I'll grade you" way.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Regular feedback Encouragement and gave me freedom to try new strategies	Just went with the flow
PG48	Give critical, informative feedback Provide support in terms of	Where to improve	Getting time to discuss and when this occurs gaining a balanced	Worked around their schedule, waited around behind for longer	The subjectivity to which they grade you – based their grades in compariso	I couldn't be placed high a lot of the time, because she didn't agree with	N/A	They could better elaborate on the grading to the	Gave feedback	Made it look like I took their advice, even though I didn't particularly

	subject knowledge Give insight into the politics and procedures of the school		view from them.		n to ourselves	'outstanding'		teachers / mentors		agree with it
PG51	Provide feedback based on areas to improve in and positives about lessons Support for lesson ideas Supportive approaches to discuss any issues with etc…	How to make lessons engaging / interactable Information regarding assessment / pupil progress A lot with regard to differentiation	Very high expectations which I sometimes Struggled with Quite crucial however, this was also helpful as I knew the areas to improve in	Was positive in response to criticisms Professional attitude	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	She helped me quite a lot with planning – very good ideas She answered any Q's that I had on various aspects of teaching Passed on her knowledge – very experienced	I took her criticisms on board and tried to be as positive as I could be and always polite

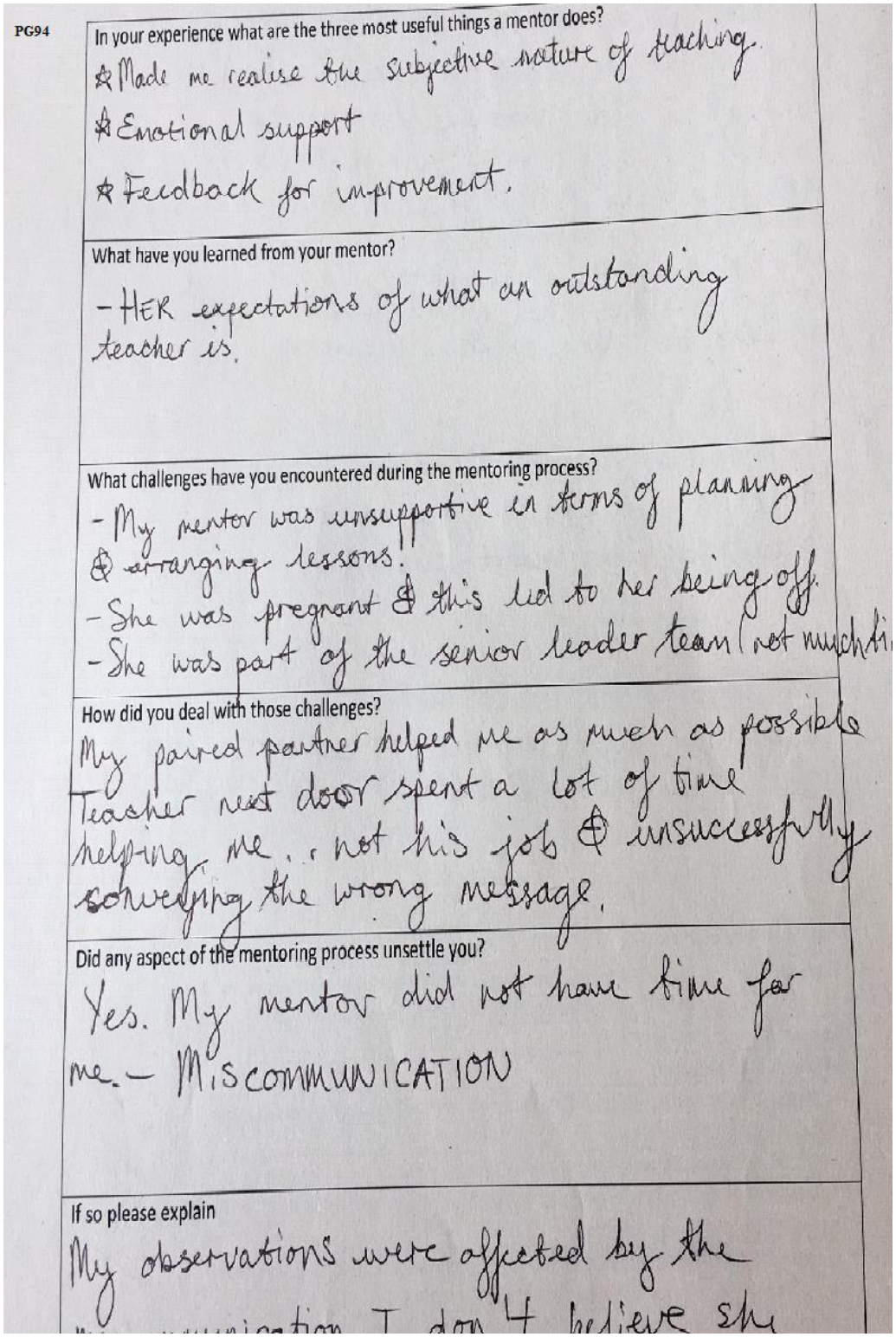
PG52	Give feedback Help with queries Help with the children's specific needs	Meeting the needs of the class organisation skills	Inconsistent support – really willing sometimes and totally uninterested the others. Not given any feedback a lot of the time	I worked really well with my placement partner which helped a lot especially in the early stages of placement. Support from other staff	Really negative feedback until link tutor observation Didn't have a lot of opportunity to observe her teach –kicked out of class!	N/A	Just got on with it Talked to my placement partner	N/A	Gave some advice Felt like I received more support from my next door teacher than my mentor	Try to take the positives to boost confidence to stop from feeling so low
PG56	Offer detailed feedback Gave me opportunities Allowed me to implement suggestions	To always be confident in what I do Always apply any/all feedback from previous experiences	Accepting teaching from my mentor, which took the 'tough love' approach to feedback Keeping the lessons I taught in	Through getting to know my mentor Mimicking my mentor	Being thrown into the deep end at the beginning	Needed time to understand my mentor I didn't feel prepared and confident enough to teach the	Building relationships	I guess there isn't much they could've done – as it was the approach and philosophy of my mentor, which the programme wouldn't	N/A	By making sure I approached my mentor in a positive manner when I had a query

		To be aware of the pace of my teaching To model everything I teach very clearly	line with my planned times was challenging			whole class		be expected to know		
PG57	Valuable advice about their experiences Support when practice is tough Motivational	Different strategies surrounding behaviour management and different technique	I was not in the same classes for registration or subjects and so my mentor did not once see me teach, but had to fill out a weekly review with only second hand info provided by my	I tried to provide info about my progress, such as lesson objectives to my mentor but still it seemed she did not have a clear picture of my progression	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Experience Advice Noting down moments	N/A

			observers. From this perspective I felt my progress was one step forward, two back							
PG58	Gives accurate critical feedback on lessons even on those which aren't officially observed Checks lesson plans Gives an increasing level of freedom over planning	Useful methods to manage and reduce stress levels	Once the mentor had confidence in my teaching, I was often left on my own which meant I didn't always get feedback	I gave him feedback on my lesson and asked for advice on how he would have adopted it	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Gave examples for each lesson how he would achieve the outstanding criteria of the lesson observation	Aim to keep the relationship professional rather than friendship

PG86	Observations and feedback Help plan a series of lessons Demonstrate effective practice	Effective modelling How to plan a series of lessons	Negative attitude towards working with students Lack of time a thoroughly explain planned lessons etc	Remain professional Support from peers	Teachers attitude toward mentoring students	Limited time, resulting in minimal support Unsupportive of student adopting creative approaches	Peer support Remain professional	N/A	Help with planning Modelling some processes	Sought and reacted to feedback Professional demeanour

Appendix 11: Example of a Completed Questionnaire (PG94)



PG94

In your experience what are the three most useful things a mentor does?

* Made me realise the subjective nature of teaching.
* Emotional support
* Feedback for improvement.

What have you learned from your mentor?

- HER expectations of what an outstanding teacher is.

What challenges have you encountered during the mentoring process?

- My mentor was unsupportive in terms of planning & arranging lessons.
- She was pregnant & this led to her being off.
- She was part of the senior leader team not much ti

How did you deal with those challenges?

My paired partner helped me as much as possible Teacher next door spent a lot of time helping me. , not his job & unsuccessfully conveying the wrong message.

Did any aspect of the mentoring process unsettle you?

Yes. My mentor did not have time for me. – MISCOMMUNICATION

If so please explain

My observations were affected by the

How did you deal with that?

- Not well. It did allow me to build up a very defensive point of view. Though I feel stronger as a person because I was left to my own devices, I've not been able to realise what my teaching style is.

How could your programme have prepared you in dealing with that response?

→ making sure the mentor did not have responsibilities that would ~~hinder~~ ~~stop her~~ prevent her being in the classroom.

What did your mentor do to support you?

→ not a lot - brief conversations.
→ feedback was ~~not~~ supportive.

How did you try to ensure that your experience of being mentored was positive?

Understand that my mentor ~~wasn't~~ didn't have the only style of teaching.

Participant Informed Consent

Research Title	Student teachers' views on what and how student teachers learn from being mentored whilst out on placement in schools in their role as 'student teacher'
Researcher	Sophie Meller

Statement of Confirmation	**Yes**	**No**
I understand that by signing and submitting this form I am agreeing to be considered as a participant in this research study.	✓	
I have been told about and understand the purpose of the study.	✓	
I have been given opportunities to ask questions about my involvement in the study and these have been answered to my satisfaction.	✓	
I understand that my responses to the questions asked above will be rendered anonymous and that I will not be identified personally when findings are published.	✓	
I understand that I can withdraw at any time and that any decision by me to do so would not adversely affect my experience on my programme of study at [redacted] University.	✓	

Name	[redacted]
Signature	[redacted]
Date	18th March 2016

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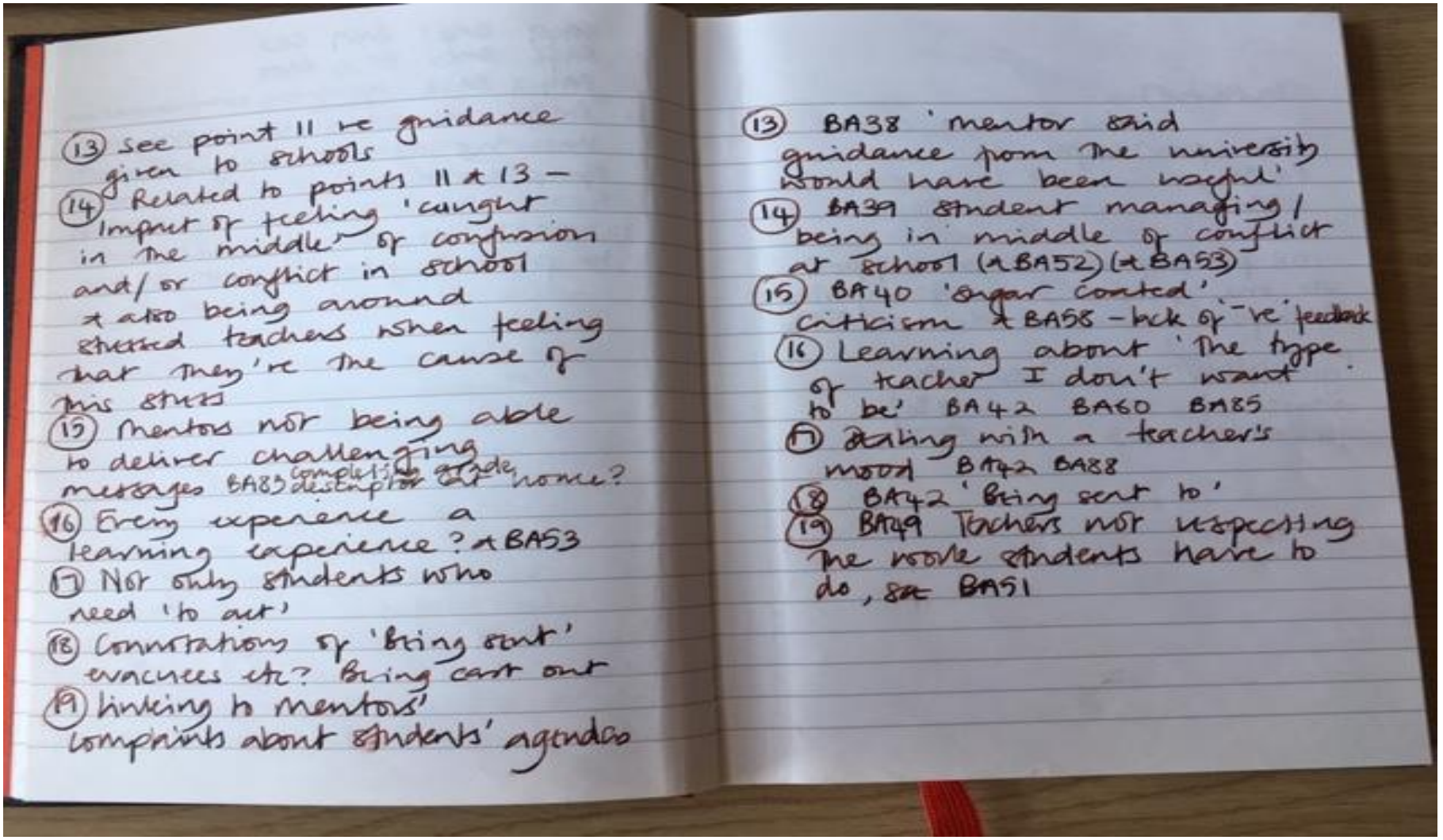
Appendix 12: Coding & Memoing (Glaser, 1978)



Appendix 13: Assembling Emerging Themes

Using different vocabulary BA27 BA 28 PG49 PG62 PG63 PG71 PG94 SA SB	Clarity of paperwork BA18 PG82 PG69 PG61 PG44 PG19 PG2 SA SB	Honesty/Betrayal BA12 BA21 BA85 PG74 PG55 PG1 PG2 SA SB	Being in the way PG80 PG72 PG64 PG44 PG7 PG2	Unreasonable expectations BA14 BA16 BA62 BA76 BA85 PG88 PG75 PG66 PG51 PG23 PG13	Inadvertent mentoring BA15
Not wanting a student BA17 BA18 PG93 PG92 PG87 PG86 PG1 SB	Trust BA21 SA SB	Not accessing documentation BA36 BA38 BA42 BA46 BA49 BA63 BA65 BA68 BA69 BA70 BA 83 BA 89 PG93 PG45	Paired placement BA 37 BA81 BA87 PG95 PG94 PG62 PG52 PG48 PG28 PG19 PG9 PG8 PG6 PG3 SA	Caught in the middle BA39 BA52 BA53 PG95	Not delivering challenging messages BA 40 BA58 BA83 SA SB
Every experience a learning experience BA42 BA53 BA60 BA85 PG94 PG90 PG89 PG89 PG78 PG73 PG55 PG14	Needing to act BA42 BA88 PG4 SA SB	Being sent on placement BA42	Students' agendas BA49 BA51 SA SB	Not being tenacious in seeking support BA52 BA70 BA87	Giving and receiving of feedback BA57 BA59 SA SB
Inconsistent support BA55 PG52 PG19	Language of feedback BA57	Feeling brushed off BA63 BA64 BA65 BA80 BA86 BA89 PG84	Mentees preparing the mentor BA68 PG69 SB	Students are not a mentor's priority BA73 BA 74 BA78 BA79 BA84	Managing the mentor BA73 BA76 BA82 BA83 BA89 BA91 PG77 PG55 PG53 PG47 PG12
Feeling lucky BA76 BA87 BA91	Allocating mentors BA80 SB	Integrating the student BA81 BA86	Lack of informal feedback BA85	Feeling unwanted BA85 PG3 PG2	First impressions BA86 SA SB
Different career stages/Responsibilities	Attitudes SA SB	Gender SA	Age SA	A great teacher doesn't always make a great mentor BA14	Not seeking support from uni BA53 BA83 BA84

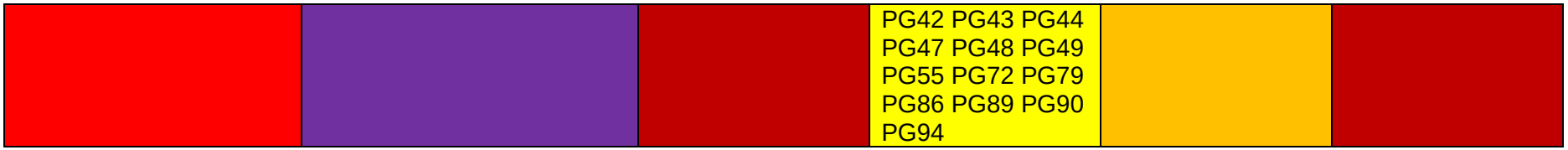
BA84 BA87 PG94 PG55					
Feedback hard to take BA54 PG56	Mismatch in perceptions of what's delivered BA55 BA58 BA60 BA69	Seeking support from uni BA52 PG95 PG90 PG61 SA SB	Insufficient time given PG94 PG90 PG89 PG86 PG79 PG72 PG55 PG49 PG48 PG47 PG44 PG41 PG40 PG34 PG28 PG26 PG14 PG13 PG11 PG10 PG9 PG8 PG7	Being undermined PG93 PG87 PG67 PG3	Uni can't do much PG91 PG56 SB

Appendix 14: Making Links & Beginning to Group Themes

Key
Reasonable Expectations
Placement Requirements/Clarity of Paperwork
Agendas
Time
Feedback
Teacher as an Actor
Relationships
Paired Placements
Response to Challenge

Using different vocabulary **BA27 BA 28 PG49 PG62 PG63 PG71 PG94 SA SB**	**Clarity of communication/paperwork** BA18 PG82 PG69 PG61 PG44 PG19 PG2 PG64 SA BP	**Honesty/Betrayal** BA12 BA21 BA85 PG74 PG55 PG1 PG2 SA BP	**Being in the way** PG80 PG72 PG64 PG44 PG7 PG2	**Unreasonable expectations** BA14 BA16 BA62 BA76 BA85 PG88 PG75 PG66 PG51 PG23 PG13	**Inadvertent mentoring** BA15
Not wanting a student BA17 BA18 PG93 PG92 PG87 PG86 PG1 BP	**Trust** BA21 SA	**Not accessing documentation** BA36 BA38 BA42 BA46 BA49 BA63 BA65 BA68 BA69 BA70 BA 83 BA 89 PG93 PG45	**Paired placement** BA 37 BA81 BA87 PG95 PG94 PG62 PG52 PG48 PG28 PG19 PG9 PG8 PG6 PG3 SA	**Caught in the middle** BA39 BA52 BA53 PG95	**Not delivering challenging messages** BA 40 BA58 BA74 BA83 SA BP
Every experience a learning experience	**Needing to act/Double Standards** BA42 BA88 PG4 SA BP	**Being sent on placement** BA42	**Students' agendas/Being respected**	**Not being tenacious in seeking support** BA52 BA70 BA87	**Giving and receiving of feedback**

BA42 BA53 BA60 BA85 PG94 PG90 PG89 PG89 PG78 PG73 PG55 PG14			BA49 BA51 PG13 PG43 PG45 PG47 PG71 PG72 SA BP		BA48 BA57 BA59 BA90PG1 PG6 PG14 PG15 PG25 PG32 PG33 PG37 PG48 PG51 PG86 SA BP
Inconsistent support BA55 PG52 PG19	**Language of feedback** BA57	**Feeling brushed off** BA63 BA64 BA65 BA80 BA86 BA89 PG84	**Mentees preparing the mentor** BA68 PG69 BP	**Students are not a mentor's priority** BA73 BA 74 BA78 BA79 BA84	**Managing the mentor** BA73 BA76 BA82 BA83 BA89 BA91 PG77 PG55 PG53 PG47 PG12
Feeling lucky BA76 BA87 BA91 SA	**Allocating mentors** BA80 BP	**Integrating the student** BA81 BA86	**Lack of informal feedback** BA85 PG19 PG27 PG52 PG58	**Feeling unwanted** BA19 BA85 PG3 PG2	**First impressions** BA86
Different career stages/Responsibilities BA84 BA87 PG94 PG55 SA BP	**Attitudes** SA BP	**Gender** SA	**Age** BP SA	**A great teacher doesn't always make a great mentor** BA14 SA	**Not seeking support from uni** BA53 BA83 BA84
Feedback hard to take BA54 PG56	**Mismatch in perceptions of what's delivered** BA55 BA58 BA60 BA69	**Seeking support from uni** BA52 PG95 PG90 PG61 SA SB	**Insufficient time given** BA2 BA3 BA6 BA9 BA14 BA17 BA33 BA51 BA63 BA71 BA73 BA74 BA78 BA80 PG7 PG8 PG9 PG10 PG11 PG13 PG14 PG15 PG17 PG26 PG28 PG34 PG40 PG41	**Being undermined** BA49 PG93 PG87 PG67 PG3	**Uni can't do much** PG91 PG56 BP


PG42 PG43 PG44
PG47 PG48 PG49
PG55 PG72 PG79
PG86 PG89 PG90
PG94

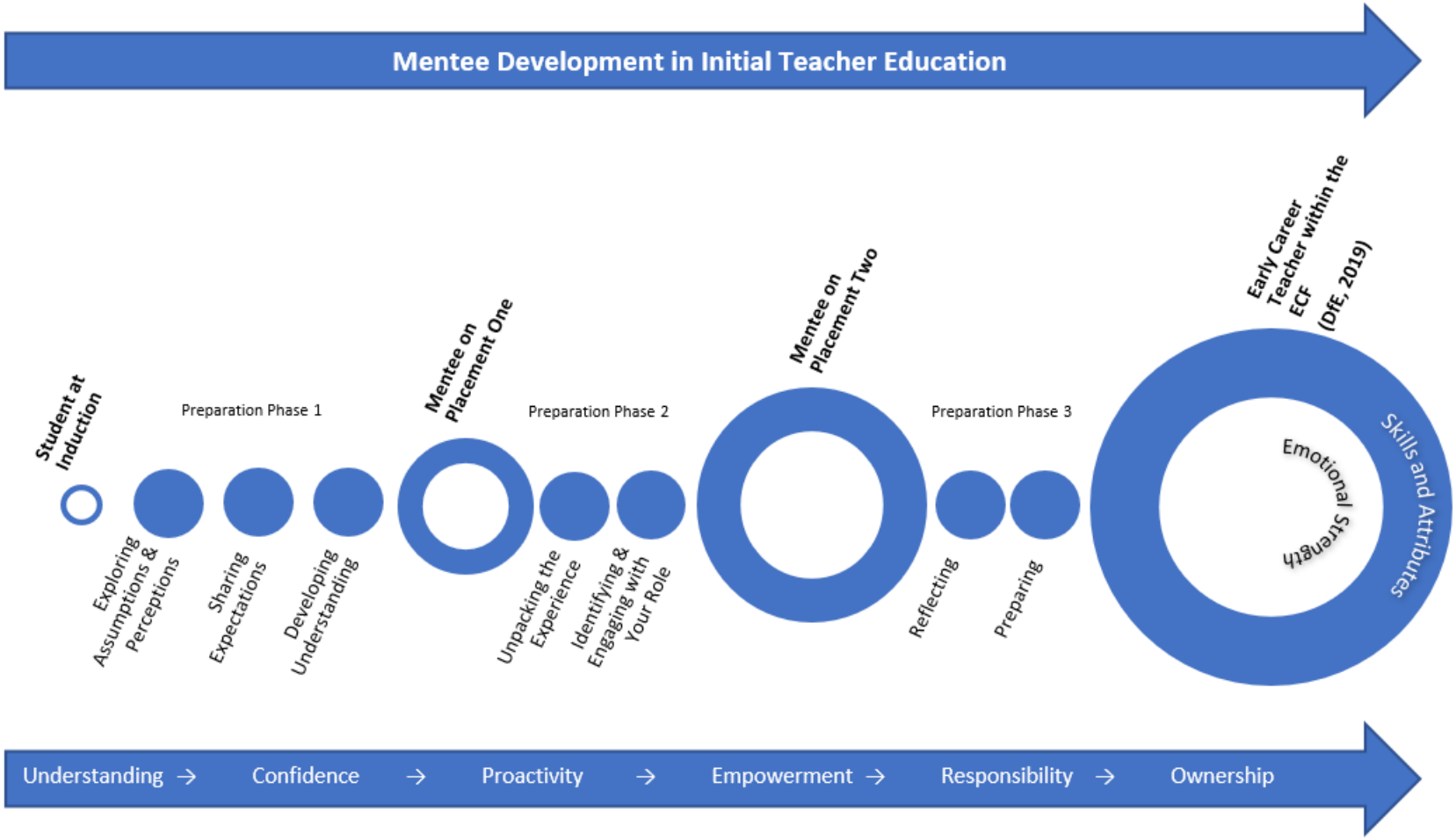
Appendix 15: Towards Drawing Conclusions

	Dealing with issues	Arising issues	Mentor	Shared theme	Mentee	Arising issues	Dealing with issues	Conclusions
Expectations		First impressions Feeling lucky	Desirable attributes of a mentee	Reasonable expectations	Attributes of an effective mentor	First impressions Feeling lucky		Terminology - Being 'sent on placement' Establishing reasonable expectations
	Seeking clarification from university	Mentors frustrated	Students will inform of placement requirements	Placement requirements Clarity of paperwork	Mentors knowing about placement requirements	Students feeling undervalued	Students sharing handbooks Mentee mentoring the mentor	Students to take ownership of communicating placement expectations
Experience		Mentors frustrated	Students' agendas	Agendas	Work's not respected	Students feeling undervalued	Passive response	Revision of placement tasks
			Not an emerging theme in mentors' data	Time	Students aren't a priority	Lack of progress for mentee Being brushed off Feelings of being unwanted	Managing the mentor Students proactively contacting link tutors	Position of mentor in school/DHTs/NQTs
	Relationship with uni Seeking support from uni	Not giving students accurate/fair feedback Feeling pressurised to pass students	Giving feedback Not wanting to fail students	Feedback	Receiving feedback	Sugar coated messages Feelings of betrayal Language surrounding feedback Informal feedback Inadvertent mentoring	Every experience a learning experience	Students need to be empowered to engage with their feedback
	Seeking support from uni	Impacts upon ability to deliver honest feedback Mentors feel that this increase the amount of tiem they need to give a student	Students' emotional responses	Teacher as an actor	Inconsistency in attitudes	Reduction of confidence	Managing the mentor Seeking support from peers/ paired placement partners/other staff within school setting	Pastoral support – managing expectations of what support is available from the mentor. Mentors being aware of need for emotional support
			Not an emerging theme in mentors' data	Relationships in school	Caught in the middle	Discomfort	Managing the mentor	Pastoral care, capacity for resilience

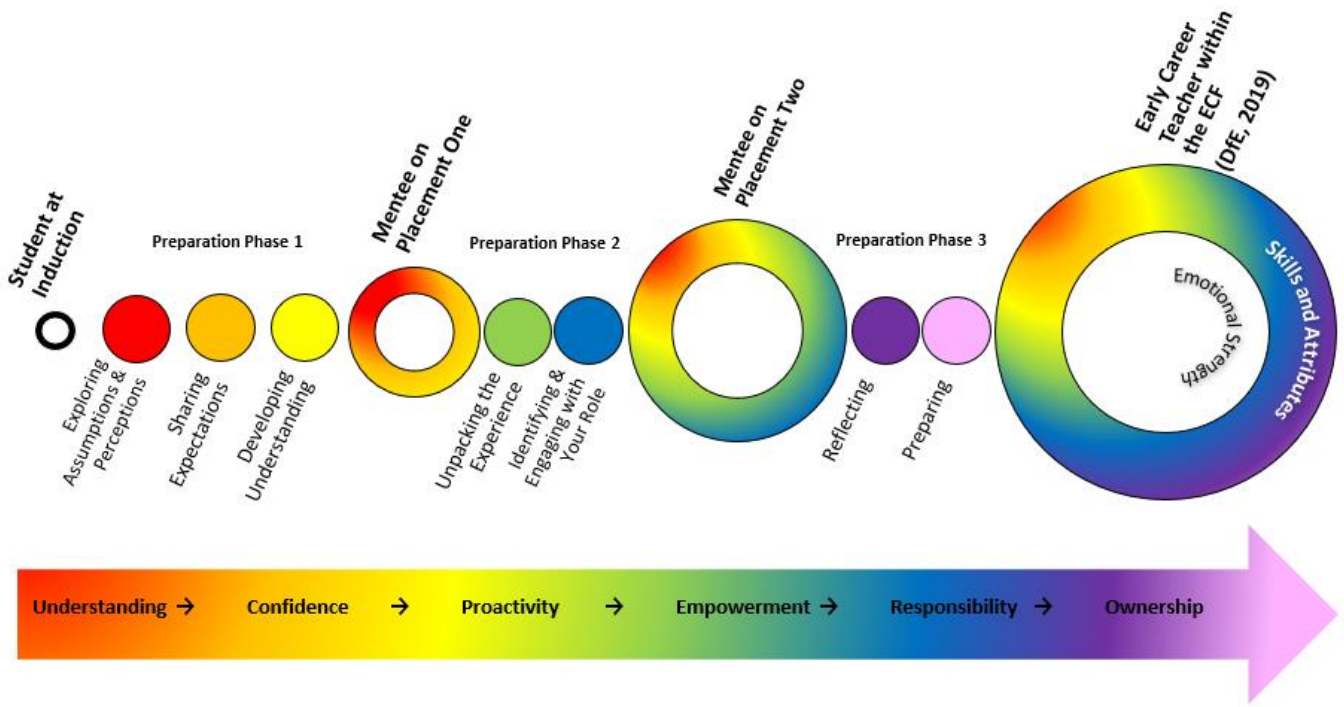
							Seeking support from peers/ paired placement partners/other staff within school setting	
	Dealt with in school – had impact on delivery of feedback	Discomfort	Power Age Gender	Issues impacting upon relationships between mentors and mentees	Not an emerging theme in mentees' date			
	Seeking support from uni	Finding delivering feedback a challenge	One student stronger than another	Paired placements	Generally supportive Challenges associated with performance	Emotional and practical support Lack of progress for one		Managing relationships, making most of the parnetrship

Appendix 16: Focus Group Ice Breaker & Elicitation Exercise

Appendix 17: V1 Conceptual Framework to Underpin a Model of Mentoring



Appendix 18: V2 Conceptual Framework to Underpin a Model of Mentoring



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